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Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk December 13, 2015

North & West edition No 690

FINANCE

Dreamland's £2.9m crisis

Company behind park
in crunch talks

CUTS

Ann Barnes' fears of more cop cuts

Anxiety despite
reassurances

INTERVIEW

Kelly Holmes on life after gold

Olympic star on her business plans
and the drug cheats ruining her sport

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Keeping the dream alive requires value over style

REVIVING our seaside towns has never been a particularly easy task.

The challenge is significant for areas which once flourished as tourist destinations in a world where international air travel was not so cheap or so plentiful.

So trying to get out of that mindset of being a venue for a family's fortnight away has never been easy, and many would argue no longer a viable or realistic option.

The result was pursuit of the London day-tripper. They ticked plenty of boxes, after all; a perception of wealth, still attracted to the prospect of paddling in the sea and, of course, potentially considering selling their cupboard-sized Fulham flat and using the proceeds to buy a sprawling country pad in Ramsgate.

Whitstable took the route of organic growth - allowing its proximity to the city and focus on food and drink to pull in the visitors



Editor **Chris Britcher**

to frankly phenomenal success. The result over the last 20 years was the make-up of the town itself morphed as Londoners flooded in and locals, priced out of their home town, fled, albeit with plenty of cash in their pockets.

Margate, on the other hand, spent big. The Turner Contemporary proved a hit simply by luring in visitors and now Dreamland is trying to capitalise on that flow of people. It, however, may yet prove to be too much concept and too little substance to prove viable in its current form. And that is a dilemma.

Dreamland will survive in one form or another, there is little doubt about that, but its lofty ambitions may need a wake-up call from reality. The Turner has no barriers and no entry fee. Dreamland sells itself on history - but needs to remember that even visiting Londoners demand and expect value for money.

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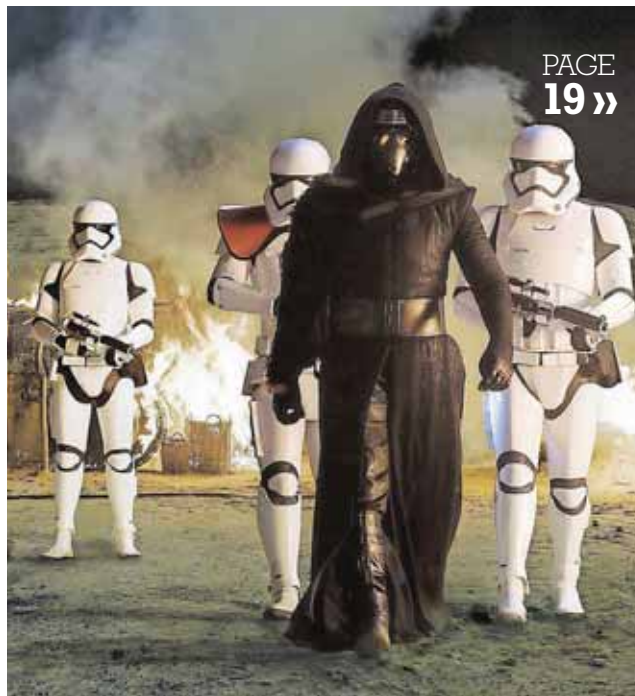
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As the temperatures start to drop then fire chiefs warn of the dangers



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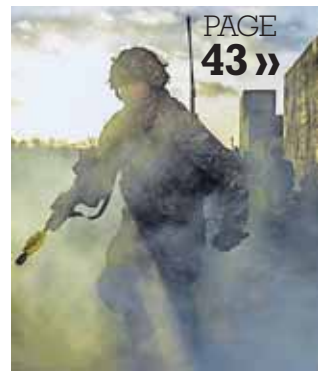
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Published in Kent and printed by Archant Print, division of Archant Community Media Limited (Co Reg No 19300), Registered Office: Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE

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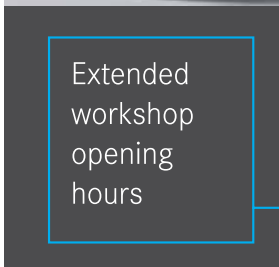
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Dreamland: £2.9m debt casts cloud over future

By Tom Pyman

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THE long-term viability of Dreamland has been called into question this week after the Margate attraction revealed it was locked in talks with creditors after running up debts of £2.9million.

Sands Heritage Limited, which runs the attraction on the seafront, has applied to the High Court for what is known as a Company Voluntary Agreement; which, if agreed, will see creditors repaid over a five year period. Should it be rejected, the company could collapse.

Some £1m of money from the local council was injected into the park which has been hit by a number of set-backs – most notably the delay in the re-opening of the Scenic Railway rollercoaster, the main ride at the park. It was shut during the summer season.

In addition, a number of expected rides have not been delivered.

Conservative MP for North Thanet, Sir Roger Gale, slammed Thanet District Council for “letting down” the company behind Dreamland.

Sir Roger said: “I’m very



STRUGGLING: Firm behind the park faces an uncertain future after debts pile up.

concerned on two fronts.

“Firstly, Dreamland is extremely important to the economy of Margate and we need it to survive, and secondly, I want to make sure my constituent companies get their money, and they will, but I’m very concerned by the way they have been let down by Thanet District Council.

“They had £5m of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and I’m trying to work out where that money has gone.

“The manner in which it has been handled is lamentable and I’m very hopeful that the agreement will go through before Christmas.”

A council spokesperson said: “We are disappointed as we discovered this through the media rather than being informed directly by them.

“We want to clarify that this is a matter for Sands Heritage Limited and not Thanet District Council.”

Sands Heritage chief executive

Eddie Kemsley said: “We are able to draw a line on a series of delays and late investments that have hindered our intentions to provide the best all-round experience for all of our visitors.

“We are grateful to all of our creditors for their understanding, support and patience and we look forward to continuing to develop fruitful relationships with them.

• **For a review of Dreamland's Frosted Fairground see p22.**

Finally, consultation to solve Operation Stack is officially launched

A PUBLIC consultation into a long-term solution to Operation Stack was launched on Friday.

It follows a £250 million pledge by chancellor George Osborne to allow a major lorry park to be sited in the county.

Operation Stack - which was in force throughout the summer - sees sections of the M20 closed to allow for HGVs held up by delays at the cross-Channel park.

It causes enormous problems for motorists and businesses and has a significant knock-on impact throughout the county.

Now a public consultation on just where it should have been launched by Highways England.

It said they will be looking for ideas to build a long term alternative for Operation Stack. It is thought a site at Stanford, near junction 11 close to Hythe, is the preferred option.

A spokesman said: “The consultation seeks views on potential sites for a lorry park and the ways in which it

could be used. Each option would help to prevent the need for the M20 to be closed when there is disruption to cross-Channel services.”

Jo James, chief executive of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, told us: “Finding an answer fast is vital. The cost of lost revenue to the local business economy in the summer ran into tens of millions of pounds.

“We welcome the launch of this consultation and hope it can quickly come up with a viable answer to this serious problem.

“When Stack is put in place, it is not the fault of any Kent companies but they are the ones that end up paying.”

The consultation is set to last until 25 January when all the submissions will be analysed and a decision made some time next year.

• **Turn to page 25 to read how the county is tackling the problem of lorries parked on our streets and industrial estates.**

Wilsons' property empire to be sold in deal worth £250m

LANDLORDS Fergus and Judith Wilson are set to sell their property empire to Arab investors in a deal said to be worth around £250million.

The former teachers became famous for building up a buy-to-let empire during the 1980s and 90s which grew to encompass some 1,000 homes - many of which are in and around the Ashford area.

They sold 100 properties in the

summer for £25m to Chinese and Indian investors.

The sale of the remaining 900 is expected to be concluded in the first part of the new year.

Those living in the couple's homes will continue to rent out the properties as part of their tenancies.

The Wilsons live in a £2m home near Maidstone.

Medway bus strike called off after sides reach agreement

A PLANNED third day of strike action on Medway's buses has been averted after talks broke the deadlock.

Drivers with Arriva had walked out for two days earlier this month and planned to do so again on Monday.

But an agreement between the drivers' union and the travel company has been reached.

The dispute centred over concerns of timetable changes putting pressures on drivers and reducing break times.

Bus services will now return to normal.

Heath Williams, MD of Arriva Southern Counties, said: “I am delighted we can now focus on ensuring our routes return to running as smoothly as possible.”



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Montgomery wreck protection over terror fear

TRANSPORT and security officials have sought to ease concerns, raised by a Kent MP, of a possible terrorist strike on the wreck of the SS Richard Montgomery.

The US American munitions ship sank during off the coast of Sheerness during the Second World War.

It sank in shallow waters laden with some 1,400 tonnes of explosives. Its mast is still visible at low tide.

And that prompted Gordon Henderson, MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey to write to the transport minister, Robert Goodwill, seeking reassurances.

Mr Goodwill said it remained under 24-hour surveillance both visually and by radar, and by regular patrols. He added: "Any incidents are immediately reported to the police and coastguard."



RIP: Ted Rouse

War hero and council leader dies aged 95

TRIBUTES have been paid to the former Labour leader of Gravesham Borough Council, Ted Rouse, who has died at the age of 95.

Mr Rouse was a freeman of the borough and known affectionately as Mr Northfleet.

He served on the former Northfleet Urban District Council for 24 years until local government reorganisation saw the creation in 1974 of the Gravesham borough.

He led the new-look council for two years and then continued as leader of the local Labour group until 1981. He was made a freeman the following year.

In 1978, he was awarded the MBE for his service to the people of Northfleet and Gravesham.

He served in the Royal Corps of Signals during the Second World War at Bletchley Park where they attempted to decode the German's Enigma machine to unlock enemy communications.

He commanded an independent mobile unit in the Normandy landings and was mentioned in dispatches for "outstanding services in north west Europe". He was married to Peggy and had two sons. Funeral arrangements for are being made and it is due to take place on January 6 with a service at 2pm at St Botolph's Northfleet.

Rail minister threatens Southeastern with £4m fines in letter to Tory MP

By Luke May

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RAIL minister Claire Perry says Southeastern trains could face a multi-million pound penalty if it fails to perform.

The firm, which operates the majority of Kent's rail services, could be hit by up to £4m if it fails to meet defined targets for stations and train and customer service.

It comes in a week where major disruption was caused on Wednesday after a signal failure at London Bridge caused delays for much of the day.

The transport chief made the threat in a letter to Old Bexley and Sidcup MP, and immigration minister, James Brokenshire.

These fines, if levied, would subsequently be reinvested by the transport department into improving performance and quality of service on the Southeastern network.

Ms Perry said that she would sit down with local MPs to discuss



THREAT: Southeastern face fines

Southeastern's performance in the new year.

Mr Brokenshire said: "In a week where passengers have suffered significant disruption, I welcome the minister's commitment to work

to improve local rail services. It is absolutely right that if Southeastern fail to meet the targets set they should be hit with a significant financial penalty."

A spokesman for Southeastern said: "This is something that is hardwired into a franchise agreement for all operating companies and set out in their contract at the start of the franchise.

"We are, of course, working hard to improve performance as a whole and subsequently avoid penalties being incurred."

• **Rochester's new multi-million pound railway station opens for the first time this weekend, right on schedule.**

The £26m station has been built on a car park in Corporation Street, closer to the town centre, in order to allow longer trains to call at the stop during peak times.

The former station stopped selling tickets from noon on Saturday with services from the new station starting today.

Gang in huge OAP scam face jail terms

A GANG of fraudsters have been found guilty of conning more than £600,000 from 18 frail pensioners with an average age of 83.

The victims, aged in their seventies, eighties and nineties and from Kent, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Bedfordshire, and London, were phoned by men posing as police officers investigating a fraud at their bank.

They were advised to transfer money or hand over cash for "safekeeping" - when in reality they were being ripped off.

Five young men from north London were on trial at the Old Bailey accused of playing a part in the plot to snare as many people as possible in 2014 and 2015. Mohamed Dahir, 23, Shakaria Aden, 21, Yasser Abukar, 23, Ibrahim Farah, 23, and Mohammed Abokar, 28, denied conspiracy to commit fraud between May 2014 and May 2015.

The jury deliberated for two days to find four of them guilty. Farah was cleared of wrongdoing.

They will be sentenced in the new year.

Heritage hub gets £4.3m funding boost

PLANS for a heritage, cultural and learning hub in the centre of Tunbridge Wells has received a £4.3million boost from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

It includes a £178,000 development grant to progress the work.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council are working in partnership to deliver the project that brings together - in one organisation and one service - the museum, art gallery, library and adult education.

Leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council David Jukes said: "Work will start as soon as possible to select architects and professionals to develop what will be one of the best cultural centres in the region.

"It will enable us to display a great deal more of our treasures and attract people from around the world to see the unique collection of Tunbridge Ware and make Tunbridge Wells a destination for arts and culture."

Subject to funding, construction could begin as early as January 2018.

High Court to rule on AONB development

A HIGH Court judge will next week consider whether the decision to grant planning permission for more than 600 homes on an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty near Dover was lawful.

CPRE Kent, the local branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, has taken the plans for Farthingloe and the Western Heights to judicial review in a last ditch to save "an iconic landscape".

Dover District Council has granted planning permission for 521 houses and a retirement village at Farthingloe and a large hotel on the Western Heights.

CPRE Kent says it has discovered the government's planning experts had recommended in 2013 the then secretary of state for planning Nick Boles 'call in' the application because of the question mark over justification of building in the AONB. However, it was ignored.

CPRE Kent chairman Christine Drury said: "A judicial review is not a decision to be taken lightly. But as this planning decision was so clearly wrong and so important it is now up to us to fight for the AONB through the court."

Cheers! Champagne corks pop as Taittinger strikes deal

By Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

ONE of the biggest names in Champagne has confirmed it has purchased land in the county with a view to growing a range of English sparkling wines.

Champagne Taittinger has snapped up 69 hectares at the Stone Stile Farm near Chatham. It will plant vines on land previously used for apple and plums.

It intends to grow chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier grapes in a joint venture with wine agent Hatch Mansfield.

Production on the south sloping fields is expected to begin in 2017.

Kent has become a successful area for wine production in recent years courtesy of the benefits of climate change and the suitable soil.

A number of producers have been trading for a number of years, establishing a reputation for the county.

It will be the first time a Champagne house has invested in the UK with the intention of producing premium English sparkling wines.

President of Champagne Taittinger, Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger, said: "Our family has strong connections to Kent through my father, Jean Taittinger, who twinned Canterbury with Reims over 45 years ago when he was Mayor of Reims.



CHAMPAGNE CITY: Taittinger has bought 69 hectares near Canterbury

"I am looking forward to being able to strengthen these links with Kent and with Great Britain as we embark on this venture.

"We have dreamt for a number of years of working with our dear friends in the UK to create a special Franco/British project."

The producer has already had success with vineyards in the US, and currently has more than 80 years of experience

Managing director of Hatch Mansfield, Patrick McGrath commented: "We have

a joint ambition to produce very high quality wines using our combined expertise.

"As a team, we have a real belief in the potential of English sparkling wine.

"Our aim is not just to be an English sparkling winemaker, but also to be a significant supporter of the whole English wine industry."

Before production can begin, the plots must be transformed from orchards into vineyards.

Attempted rapist gets a six-year sentence

A MAN who attempted to rape an unconscious man in Chatham has been jailed for six years after appearing at Maidstone Crown Court.

Michael Nobbs, 24, approached his victim in Chatham on October 2. He was caught on CCTV with operatives alerting the police and Nobbs being arrested.

The victim was unaware of the incident until police notified him.

And to a bus stop the baby Jesus was born

A NATIVITY play takes place at the St Laurence Church in Bapchild on Monday as a local Scout group put on a performance which depicts the baby Jesus being born in a Sittingbourne bus stop.

The play sees Mary and Joseph enter the county as refugees. The play starts at 6pm. Funds goes to refugee charities.

Beware bogus callers

SOUTH East Water is warning householders to be on alert for bogus visitors claiming to be "from the water board" and seeking access to people's homes.

Steve George, customer services director, said: "Unfortunately, Christmas can be a time when opportunist thieves take advantage, knowing there are new and valuable gifts in the home."



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'Do not resuscitate' order fury as trust forced to say sorry

THE county's biggest NHS trust has apologised after it placed a "do not resuscitate" order on the medical records of a disabled man and listed Down's syndrome as one of the reasons.

The family of 51-year-old Andrew Waters have spoken of their anger that the Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) orders were placed without their knowledge or consent on two occasions that he was admitted to the QEOM in Margate in 2011.

It also said the family were "unavailable" despite their regular attendance to visit Mr Waters, who suffered from dementia and died earlier this year from an unrelated cause.

His brother Michael Waters said: "I still feel very angry about this. As a family we are also upset that



the doctor concerned has still not offered any personal apology despite this admission from the trust."

The East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, which

runs the QEOM plus William Harvey in Ashford and the Kent and Canterbury hospitals has admitted wrongdoing and apologised after the family took legal action.

Pent Valley school faces closure as numbers drop

FOLKESTONE's Pent Valley Technology College faces closure after a public consultation was launched into its future.

It is proposed the poorly performing school would close from September 2016 for all pupils except the present Year 10 who are in the middle of their GCSE courses, and for all pupils from September 2017.

Pupils in Years Seven to Nine will be offered places at other local schools. Those in Year 11 and the sixth form will be supported in finding options to continue their education elsewhere.

It comes after a massive drop-off in admissions, struggles with budgets and exam results which have seen just 15 per cent of pupils hitting the required five GCSEs at A*-C

grade including English and maths.

In a letter from Patrick Leeson, Kent County Council's corporate director of education and young people's services, he said: "This has come about because the school has very low pupil numbers, which is a situation that does not look likely to improve in the near future."

"As a result the school has a rapidly reducing budget and will not have the resources to provide an adequate education for its pupils. At the same time the school is performing poorly."

"As it is forecast that there will be a need for additional school places from 2018, it is expected that a new school would need to open on the Pent Valley site by September of that year."

Manston to the rescue?

NORTH Thanet MP Sir Roger Gale has reiterated his view Manston Airport offers the only mid-term solution to Britain's need for additional air freight capacity.

It comes amid mounting concerns over a further six-month delay in a decision on expansion at Heathrow or Gatwick.

Killers jailed for 30 years

TWO men have been jailed for a total of 30 years after killing a man in Chatham - attacked near his home after challenging the pair over their drunken behaviour.

Michael Tierney died in hospital two days after being attacked by George French and William Fleming in June 2015.

Festive fake taxi warning

THE licensing team at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is reminding people planning a night out over the festive season to think ahead about travel arrangements and always use a licensed taxi.

Its message is 'don't get into an unregistered car which isn't displaying taxi plates'.

It's a pea-tastic prize

BROTHERS David and Roderick Tyrrell who have spent their working lives farming 215 acres on Romney Marsh have scooped a prestigious national award for a crop of dried peas.

The Daytona peas won a prize at the British Edible Pulse Association's annual contest.



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Top Three Stories



1. Cash machine theft

Glen Farlam was jailed for six years

2. 'Life and soul of party'

Tributes for woman killed in M20 crash

3. Missing teens appeal

Two boys, 14, went missing in Whitstable

The Essential Guide:



...to Margate's Dreamland

Everything you need to know about the re-imagined amusement park



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Welling United crashed out of the FA Cup in the second round last Sunday, as they were humbled 0-5 by Carlisle United at Park View Road

Missed last week's...?

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Top Three Blogs



1. Campaigns miss point

More awareness needed on mental health

2. Too reliant on phones?

Do we have an unhealthy obsession?

3. Straight outta uni

A young man's transition to the real world

Results of the KoS Online Poll

Have you been to Dreamland amusement park?

- 1 Yes, I loved it - 24%
- 2 Yes, but I won't go back - 15%
- 3 No, but I will soon - 29%
- 4 No, I have no plans to go - 32%

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POLICING AND AUSTERITY: Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes and Chief Constable Alan Pughsley both spoke at a conference on Wednesday concerning budget cuts

Police chiefs announce possible council tax hike to cover costs

Taxpayers in Kent could end up supporting police costs in the fight against terrorism writes [Luke May](#)

POLICE chiefs discussed a potential increase in council tax to cover costs in the county's policing earlier this week.

Speaking at the Policing and Austerity conference in Maidstone on Wednesday, Police and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes asked the audience how they would feel contributing a further £5 in council tax to policing in the county.

Mrs Barnes told the meeting the police had a "difficult decision to make" to cover police spending.

The rise would see Band D properties suffer a 3.4 per cent increase in council tax, to cover costs in police spending.

A potential increase in council tax could cover some of the cost towards recruiting new firearms officers for Kent Police.

The recruitment comes from the government's recommendations as the police aim to combat terrorism.

Kent Police currently need to see 37 new firearms officers trained, with the suggested increase in council tax covering the cost of recruiting and training 24 officers per year.

Mrs Barnes explained: "The terrorism threat level is severe, Kent is at the forefront of Europe, we are the country's borders, around 30 million people pass through Kent every year.

"The government has requested that all forces increase their firearms officers so money is needed to invest and train those officers.

"We can tax the precept up to a capping level of 2 per cent, but on top

of that the 10 lowest preceptors are going to be given permission to add a little bit extra, to try and eventually get them toward the national average – £5 a year extra"

"We will use the money to get these 37 officers across two years, we need to invest in those firearms officers and in their equipment.

"Public safety is paramount, in the event of an attack here in Kent we cannot wait for firearms officers to come down from Suffolk or Thames Valley, we've got to have enough people here to instantly respond.

"Equipping those officers means taking about 37 officers from the existing force, but where are they going to come from?"

"Terrorists are living with us, they're in our neighbourhood. Neighbourhood policing is really important to create trust between public and the police, we need our community officers, so if we're taking people of the community teams to bolster firearms teams, we're going to have to recruit more officers for the neighbourhood teams

"This of course has a knock on effect on PCSOs and specials ranks, so you can see the knock-on effect.

Currently, Kent is among the lowest contributors of council tax in the country, which would entitle the government to raise council tax above the usual cap of 2 per cent.

Households currently contribute £147.15 a year to Kent Police, the third joint-lowest in the country.

Mrs Barnes had previously expressed her "delight" following the

“ The terror threat level is severe, Kent is at the forefront of Europe, we are at the country's borders, with around 30m people passing through each year ”

Ann Barnes,
Police and Crime Commissioner

news after the chancellor's autumn statement that Policing would not face any further cuts.

However Mrs Barnes explained "the devil was in the detail" and called the conference on Wednesday.

Her concerns were somewhat confirmed when, on Tuesday, home secretary Theresa May told police: "The overall policing budget is protected, but not the wasteful and inefficient spending we all know still exists."

During the conference, Kent Police's chief finance officer Sean Nolan discussed the challenge to save an estimated £8.5m across 2016/2017.

He explained: "The policing budget is much better than we feared before the spending review.

"Our current conservative estimates show we have cost pressures of £8.5m for 2016/2017 taking inflation and next year's National Insurance increase due to pension reform into account.

"This does not include any unforeseen costs."

"In the statement's smaller print, it goes on to say the government will maintain overall force budgets at current cash levels over the life time of the spending review.

"So if nothing else it means we have to make savings for those inflationary pressures over those four years, as well as the national insurance hike ahead of pensions reviews.

"Let's assume we have one per cent sliced off our current grant and recycled in to national funding, each million pound of cost saved, equates to about 20 police officers.

"Raising council tax precepts by 3.4 per cent rather than the capped 2 per cent would create a difference of £1.2m, around 24 officers.

"That's the challenge we are conscious of, we need to wait until next week until we can be sure."

However Kent's Chief Constable Alan Pughsley explained the difficulty police face in finding the savings, after already saving more than £60m since 2011.

Mr Pughsley described the current situation as "the most challenging time I've ever seen in policing".

He said: "544 police officers, 612 police staff, have left the organisation and will not be coming back since 2011, that's got nothing to do with financial pressures going forward, we're dedicated to protecting the public but people should absolutely understand the financial pressures that we're under.

"The budget was good news for us at Kent Police, it's still a massive challenge without any doubt but not as bad as the £62m we were planning for.

"When you start making cuts there may be some fat on the bone, but when you've taken that much out it's difficult to that much out again.

"We had four years of plans with savings identified to go forward with what our assumptions were before the budget announcement, our assumptions will only be slightly different, but we will know more on the December 16."

On Wednesday (December 16), the local government finance settlement will be released by the government, giving details of the funding going to councils.

Nationally, police chiefs expect a reduction from the £174m their forces received last year.

Mr Pughsley has assured officers jobs are not at direct risk ahead of the funding settlement announcement next week.

He said: "We will protect front line officers at all costs, and use every other funding stream available. To cover any costs."

Ahead of next week's announcement for the police grant from central government, police chiefs seem mainly positive in their reaction to last month's Autumn Statement.

The reaction could suggest a hopeful picture for policing across the county as it faces the largest terror threat in recent years.

80 patients sent out of county for mental care

New figures show the Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust send the second highest number of patients 'out of area' for mental health care in the country

By David Powles & Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

SCORES of mental health patients in Kent are being sent miles from the county for care, according to new figures.

Over the summer, the Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust has seen the second highest number of patients sent further than 50km from the county for care of all mental health trusts in the country.

Some 25 people were treated in such a way in both June and July of this year and 30 in August.

The statistics were revealed ahead of a House of Commons debate calling for the government to set a target to end the practice within 12 months.

Mental health patients are normally sent 'out of the area' if the specialist hospital beds in the county are either full or certain services are not provided in the first place.

Norman Lamb, Liberal Democrat MP for North Norfolk and former care minister and host of the debate, said: "This practice can cause great distress and is further evidence of the systematic disadvantage faced by those suffering mental ill health."

"This practice would not be tolerated in cancer care or for somebody who has suffered a stroke, so why does it continue in the case of mental illness?"

In the debate he said sending patients for treatment far away from their home should be treated by the NHS as a "never event."

Health minister Alistair Burt said: "These issues have been there for some time, government in, government out."

"I think the coalition government made huge strides in recognising the importance of mental health and driving forward some of the changes that need to be made."

Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) statistics indicate a rise in out of area placements, with 2,198 instances in August alone.

Helen Whately, MP for Faversham



and Mid Kent, told KoS: "These high levels of out of area placements are a worry."

"It's much better for people to receive treatment and care closer to home, where they can get support from family and friends and feel more confident in their care from local professionals. It's obvious that there's a shortage of beds, and there will always be some people that need to be in a hospital because they need that level of care."

"The government is committed to tackling this and there are a range of policies in the pipeline aimed at tackling this problem, but we need better access to data so we know how to respond to that information."

Such changes the government are considering implementing to improve that access to data include the introduction of Ofsted-style reviews of clinical



CARE: Kent has the second highest number of patients being sent for treatment out of area

cal commissioning groups, so that people can easily compare the quality of care offered by clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) on a national level.

Gillingham and Rainham MP Rehman Chishti added: "It is disappointing the trust is continuing to send so many patients many miles outside of their local area, away from their families and friends, at a huge cost, which could be better spent locally on maintaining good quality services close to where they live."

"This is an issue that I have raised

in Parliament and I have campaigned for improvements to mental health services locally and nationally."

Vicki Nash, head of policy and campaigns at Mind, the mental health charity, said: "We have heard in recent months many reports of people in mental health crisis being sent out of their local area because of a shortage of beds. This isn't acceptable."

"It is essential that people in crisis can access the help they need close to home."

"We know that it's a difficult time for the NHS but commissioners have

to make sure services can meet local demand and treat a mental crisis just as seriously as a physical emergency."

A spokesperson for the trust said: "We continue to work with partner organisations on a day by day basis to keep patients who need a bed within Kent and Medway wherever possible."

"Additionally we are reviewing with local NHS CCGs the medium term need, and funding, for services that would act as an alternative to inpatient admission or separate additional bed capacity."

A MENTAL HEALTH PATIENT SPEAKS OUT...

"I WAS admitted to accident and emergency on a Wednesday afternoon, following a suicide attempt. I regained consciousness the following day, having been transferred to an Acute Medical Unit, and it was quickly decided I needed to be admitted to a mental health ward. At this point I was very woozy, suffering from a dangerously low mood, and angry that my suicide attempt had failed."

"I was at grave risk of making another attempt on my life. Throughout Thursday and Friday, efforts were being made to find a mental health bed. My parents were frantically trying to find out what was happening, as they were desperate for me to be looked after locally."

"During the Friday, I twice walked off the ward and out of the hospital – without my absence being noticed – with the intention of

walking in front of a bus or a lorry. The main reason that I didn't go through with it, was because I did not want the vehicle to swerve into an oncoming car and cause death or injury to someone else."

"Meanwhile my parents resorted to contacting the crisis team as they could not get any information from the bed team. A member of the crisis team took responsibility for finding out what was happening and he was able to let me and my parents know that I would be transported to south London later that Friday evening."

"Finally, after more uncertainty, two men arrived to take me to London. At 10pm, feeling suicidal, frightened and confused, I got into the back of a private ambulance (which was no more than a pretty austere minibus), and was driven away. Throughout the drive, I was spoken to just once by one of the

two men, and felt more like a prisoner being transported, than a patient."

"At 1am, by now completely disorientated, we arrived at the front door of the mental health unit. After lots of knocking at the door, someone answered, and I was handed over with a quick "good luck"."

"I was booked in and shown to my room. I felt isolated and scared. My room was nice, but the unit felt like a prison. The internal doors were like cell doors, and there was a tiny outdoor area, fringed by a high fence with spikes on the top. It was a mixed ward, both in terms of sex and in terms of illness: people with depression and anxiety were alongside those with psychosis, personality disorders and acute problems."

"The following morning, I had a meeting with my named nurse."

Extraordinarily, it was the only real conversation I had with him until I was discharged back to a ward nearer home 10 days later. The care was unacceptable. It felt as though I was being kept in a holding facility, and my mental health deteriorated, with my suicidal thoughts increasing. I rarely had a conversation with a member of staff. My parents came down twice to see me, and were horrified by what they encountered – both the level of care and my deterioration."

"The stress made them both ill. Thankfully, their persistence paid off, and after 10 days, I was told that I was being recalled. Eventually, I was told to get into a taxi with a member of staff and was driven to a ward near home."

"When I arrived there, I cried, mainly through relief. After 10 wasted and expensive days – my recovery finally began."



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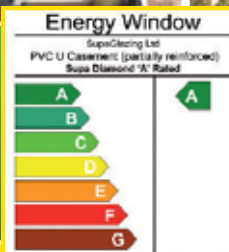
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Sporting legend sweeping floors and dreaming of more success

Chris Britcher talks to Hildenborough's double Olympic champion, one year after the opening of her Cafe 1809, to discover how she's turning her focus and ambition on delivering results in the world of business after her glory on the track

TWELVE years ago, Kelly Holmes crossed the line in the Olympic Stadium in Athens and in that instant changed her life forever.

In fact, to be more accurate, she crossed the line twice. Both when heading the field, and both in the biggest arena of the sporting world.

She returned to the UK clutching two gold medals for the 800m and 1,500m and into what she describes as "like a weird dream where I was treated like a pop star".

Today, however, were you to go into a bustling cafe in a west Kent village, the chances are you'd spot her sweeping the floor. Or serving tables. Or behind the cash till.

But this is not a classic rags to riches to rags tale. Of a fortune squandered amid sudden global fame. This is the now retired athlete's big business venture.

Cafe 1809 – the number she wore on her vest when she triumphed on those memorable August nights in Greece – is a place she long dreamed of bringing to her home town of Hildenborough – a village in which she grew up and continues to live today.

So, as we chat amid the hustle and bustle of the popular venue, does Dame Kelly – as she is now officially known – really get her hands dirty here?

"You've not been here before have you?" she laughs. "You ask the people who come here – they'll tell you."

This is no little village tea room, however, it's a sprawling multi-purpose venue which Dame Kelly says she created to bring a little "sparkle" to the village.

Last weekend hundreds turned up to celebrate its first birthday and it has recently launched its own range of jams and coffee.

It employs some 18 people now and is going from strength-to-strength.

"You have to lead by example," says Dame Kelly, who project managed the demolition of the former newsagent that once stood here, and now assumes what she describes as a 'creative director' role at the venue.

"If you want to be in business you have to lead by example and you can't tell people about how to keep a floor clean if you don't know how to do it and can't show them.

"I have high standards and if you want to portray yourself as bringing some sparkle, you have to deliver that."

Like all successful sports people, deep within her genes is a competitiveness and steely

determination which drives her on.

But she only achieved her goals – first by moving up through the ranks as a physical training instructor in the Army and then in such glorious style at the 2004 Olympics – by a work ethic which continues to drive her today.

"I was in the Army from 17, had a full-time job at 16 and had a paper round for three to four years leading up to that.

"You have to work. I know how to do that. I know that if you want to get better you have to prove it – people don't just give things to you."

I last spoke to Dame Kelly two weeks before that Athens triumph. I was struck then by the self-doubt demons which clearly gnawed away at her.

Too often she had reached the big championships only for injury to scupper her chances.

"I think before Athens I was scared it could go well for once," she says – clearly most animated when remembering the events which fulfilled a dream and changed her life.

"I was free of injuries and I made a conscious decision to let my legs do the talking. The year before had been emotionally so hard."

While training in France in 2003 she would later admit she reached a new low as injuries seems to conspire again to prevent her dazzling on the biggest stage. She would confide she self-harmed, considered suicide at her lowest ebb, and was diagnosed as clinically depressed.

A religious person would consider what happened 12 months later the most remarkable salvation.

"I just wanted to focus on the running," she says of those weeks leading up to glory. "My body was in shape, times were good, but I didn't want to do too much talking. I only did a couple of interviews, with you and British Forces Broadcasting Services."

"The focus at the time was all on how Paula Radcliffe was going to perform, and that was a real benefit to me as it allowed me just to keep my focus."

Within the space of six days she over-turned the 100-1 odds of her completing a golden double and became, in doing so, Britain's most successful ever middle distance female athlete.

She returned to a whirlwind of publicity, red carpet events and a memorable homecoming parade through the streets of Tonbridge and her village, where thousands lined the streets to welcome her home.

"I thought I'd stepped into a weird dream where I was treated like a pop star," she re-



TEAM: Dame Kelly Holmes and her team at the cafe in Hildenborough and, right, on the homecoming parade which saw her travel through the streets of Tonbridge and Hildenborough to celebrate her remarkable success at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.



calls, "people were stopping their car in the street and waving at me. Leaning out of windows."

But after that initial buzz she found herself "really lost". Unaware of what to do next.

Aged 45 today (reminding her of her age meets with a deep groan), she was 34 when she won in Athens.

"Since I was 14 I always had a focus – to fulfil dreams first in the Army and then in athletics.

But then I found I had achieved them all. What now? I had not one little clue. I just got into that whirlwind of being invited everywhere but didn't know where it was all going.

"I needed something else to keep going for. I didn't want lots of days off – that's not me. I'd rather bust a gut and focus on doing something else."

So, after continuing a mentoring programme with young athletes and starting up her own charity, she entered the world of business with

the same determination to succeed as she does everything else in life.

She has invested in property and the cafe ("I've put an enormous amount in") and is now eyeing expansion.

She wants a string of concessions bearing the 1809 brand to expand into health clubs, gyms and swimming pools, with a range of healthy snacks or treats.

"It won't be something this big to start with,"

she says about the Hildenborough venture. "Maybe just juice and salad bars or coffee and takeaways."

Given the brand values and clout which exist in her name – all those businesses crave such as health, vitality and success – you wouldn't want to bet against her making a big splash in the sector.

But, given what she's like, she's clearly determined to learn how to walk before she runs.

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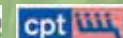
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The good news is she intends to expand into Kent first.

"Without a doubt," she admits, "I put an immense amount of pressure on myself because I want to be good at other things. I want to be successful. I was successful in athletics, but hopefully I have a long life left and I want to do other things and do them well.

"I probably do too much. I work stupid hours, but I have that drive.

"But if I want to be a credible businesswoman I need to build on this and go on from that. If I can develop a brand that would be a big achievement."

While still adapting to life outside athletics, she has been hugely disappointed by the drug scandal which has threatened to destroy the sport's reputation.

"It's definitely got into a bad situation. The problem is it's the very few people ruining it for everyone. More than 99 per cent of people who dedicate their life to achieving success and love their sport are now coming under scrutiny as a result of these people and that's not nice.

"People need to look at it and say enough is enough. Now is the time for change. No pussyfooting about. Things need to be happening. There should be drastic changes right across the board and rules in place and stuck by.

"Sport is about role models and athletics needs to get back to that."

For Dame Kelly life today is a rather jet-set one. In demand around the world for motivational speaking and commitments to her charity, her determination to be a success by pursuing an approach of hard work is an admirable one.

And just a reminder that if you want role models, you need look no further than our very own home grown star.



WORKING: Dame Kelly insists on leading by example at her Cafe 1809



HAPPY LIFE IS A HEALTHIER LIFE

THE ethos behind Cafe 1809 is, perhaps not surprisingly, on lifestyle. But you'll get no preaching from Dame Kelly Holmes.

She knows that a healthy approach needs to come from a lifestyle rather than simply being told.

"I wouldn't say I was healthy," she laughs, "but when I was young I was into my athletics from the age of 12.

"We didn't have a bus from Hildenborough back then so I used to cycle to my school, the Hugh Christie in Tonbridge, then cycle to Tonbridge Athletics Club for training, then cycle home again.

"Kids just get on the bus now and they just walk for five minutes. It became my routine and that's the important thing to become your lifestyle. To remember there's a balance to strike.

"The fact is I can pretty much eat what I want because I do my exercises. I like my food, I never just ate a lettuce leaf, but that's why I trained so hard and got my results.

"I'm the worse. I have the most terrible sweet tooth. You ask anyone who knows me and they'll tell you I'm always eating the most chocolate sweets; but I'm probably the strongest and fittest out of them all. But I know when to make those changes, when to stop and how to balance things."

And that comes down to the age old equation of doing regular exercise and eating in moderation.

Her cafe is launching an Active Soul programme next month



offering reward points and discounts for those signing up for free. She hopes to create links with nearby health centres to make those slight adjustments to a better, happier life.

"It's about making small changes," she says. "Like here, we do cooked breakfasts, but we don't fry anything – it will instead be baked in the oven. It's not about not having things, but being aware if you have too much it will cause problems later. It's about it in moderation and having it cooked or produced in a different way; it can make a difference.

"But you have to make sure education goes into schools and kids are aware that ailments people have because of high sugar intake can cause problems in later life."

For details on the cafe, visit www.cafe1809.co.uk.

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The Green Man is a friendly, family run pub located in the picturesque hamlet of Hodsoll Street on the North Downs in beautiful Kent countryside.

Your hosts are David, Jean and John Haywood and they lead a team of talented people who are there to ensure everyone has a great time. The extensive menu is prepared fresh to order from the finest ingredients and has something to suit all tastes. The cask ales and lagers are well kept and fine wines and spirits are available for those who do not enjoy a good pint.

The Green Man features a large garden to the rear of the building with ample car parking making it an ideal watering hole during your tour of Kent whether it be a simple visit to the country, a shopping trip to Bluewater, a sporting occasion at Brands Hatch or on route to France via Eurostar or the Kent ports.

Sunday Roasts at the Green Man Pub promise you just as much flavour and variety with beef, chicken, lamb shank, pork belly and vegetarian roast options. The roast is available from 12-8.30 pm.

The Green Man also packs a punch with its event nights that see a fun Quiz Night on Monday night, Tuesday's Steak and Rib Night, Fish Night on Wednesdays and Pies and Puddings Night (two courses for £12) on a Thursday.

Live music every Sunday Night from 7.30pm and monthly every 2nd Thursday with even more in December for your Christmas parties. Programme available on our website or facebook.

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Live Music

UPCOMING EVENTS...

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Tuesday 15th December	The Andy White Duo @ 8.30pm <i>Vocals, guitar and bongos - ideal for a party</i> <i>The play list of covers is amazing</i>
Thursday 17th December	Steve Lauri from The Hollies @ 8.30pm <i>Vocals & guitar and some great Hollies hits</i> <i>Bring your dancing shoes</i>
Sunday 20th December	Nigel & Katie @ 8.30pm <i>Katie is the vocalist and Nigel on keys</i> <i>Come and be wowed!</i>
Tuesday 22nd December	Innocent Bystanders @ 8.30pm <i>Vocals, guitar, keyboards and sax</i> <i>Covering hits from the 70s/80s and more</i>
Thursday 24th December	Christmas Eve Nick Woods @ 8.00pm <i>Nicks vocals and guitar are the best</i> <i>From old to new covers - something for everyone</i>

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BACK: The Force Awakens opens on Thursday and reunites the stars of the 1977 original in a film set 30 years after the conclusion of the Return of the Jedi

CAPTION: is here

Star Wars fans all set to blast off into hyperspace at film opening

Anticipation for the seventh film in the series has reached fever pitch and this week we finally get a chance to see the space saga return. But Star Wars has become far more than just an action movie

By Chris Britcher & Chris Murphy
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

SPACE juggernaut Star Wars will rampage through the county this week as the latest movie finally hits the big screen.

And that is going to mean a

massive shot in the arms to cinema chains and a huge surge in sales of movie merchandise on our high streets.

The Force Awakens premieres on Thursday and is set to play to sell-out theatres across Kent over the weekend.

Few would bet against it being the biggest opening weekend for a movie of all time.

Globally, that record is currently held by summer blockbuster Jurassic World which sold £138.5m of tickets globally when it opened.

Estimates suggest it will make anywhere between £122m to a staggering £165m.

Little wonder, then, that Disney – which bought the rights to the franchise for £2.5bn from

creator George Lucas three years ago – is ratcheting up the hype in these final few days.

To underline the frenzy, when a trailer went online in October it received 112 million hits in the space of just 24 hours.

Regardless of if you love or hate it, you will not be able to avoid the power of the Force this month.

A spokesman for the Odeon chain, which has cinemas in Tunbridge Wells, Canterbury, Maidstone and Chatham said: "Star Wars is currently selling double the tickets per day that [the latest James Bond film] Spectre was selling two weeks out; and so far our total pre-sales for The Force Awakens are nearly four times bigger than at the equivalent time for 50 Shades of Grey a fortnight before launch.

"Our Kent cinemas will be doing late night screenings to ensure our guests have plenty of opportunity to be among the first to see the film – as always we're encouraging guests to book ahead as early as possible to ensure they secure the seats and times they want."

Andreas Vass, head of film at Cineworld, which has cinemas in Ashford and Strood, added: "This is one of the most hotly anticipated films of 2015 and we knew that it was going to be extremely popular with cinemagoers. We've seen lots of people secure their tickets for the opening midnight shows, as well as

the opening weekend – a number of which have already sold out."

Mark Barlow, general manager at Showcase Cinemas at Bluewater, said it was continuing to add screenings to meet demand. Its first showing starts at one minute past midnight on the day of release.

"At present we have 43 separate showing times across all formats [3D and 2D], including seven in Imax3D, on the first day of release alone."

Staff at the Disney store at Bluewater reported brisk trade in their Star Wars corner of the shop, set up next to another of their big purchases, Marvel.

One worker there said: "We are regularly topping up the shelves – I should imagine business will take another major jump when the film finally comes out. I am looking forward to seeing it as much as anyone."

Francesca Donovan is centre manager at Westwood Cross in Broadstairs. She said the Force had stretched across its stores.

"They have entered into the spirit of the premiere with a whole host of promotional products available to purchase in stores."

And Nicky Blanchard, manager at Royal Victoria Place in Tunbridge Wells, said: "It has been amazing. Stores have seen people come in just to see what Star Wars merchandise they have."

For some, of course, Star Wars is more than just a film. The

WHY THE FORCE FUSS?

THERE are a variety of reasons this latest Star Wars film is creating such an enormous stir.

The first and foremost is that it reunites, for the first time since 1983, the stars of the original, acclaimed, trilogy.

And that means Harrison Ford (Han Solo), Carrie Fisher (Princess Leia) and Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker) united again in a way many fans thought they would never see.

The original three movies – Star Wars, the Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi – were pioneering movies which took special effects to a whole new level and revolutionised the way films are marketed.

Through the creation of a relentless wave of toys and merchandise, Star Wars spread its tentacles everywhere. Coupled with a thrilling storyline and a classic Good vs Evil plot, the movies captured the imagination



of a generation.

And when they passed their love on to their children, a chain was created which allowed toys to keep being sold and the industry around the films continue to gather pace.

In the late 1990s, creator George Lucas decided to revive the franchise – creating three new films 'prequels' set before the original films, which allowed for an entirely new cast and told the story of the formation of central character Darth Vader.

The Phantom Menace, Attack of the Clones and Revenge of the Sith

generated enormous amounts of money and appealed to a whole new generation.

But the consensus was that they were not a patch on the originals and fans ultimately felt a little let down.

Such was the backlash, George Lucas vowed never to make another Star Wars movie.

But then, at the end of 2012, it was confirmed Disney was buying LucasFilms and with it the rights to Star Wars for £2.5bn. Part of the deal was the creation of at least another three movies... and, crucially, the reunion of the original cast.

All that means is The Force Awakens will pick up some 30 years after Return of the Jedi left off.

Top director JJ Abrams – who breathed new life in to the Star Trek franchise – is in charge and expectation levels are, to coin a cliché, out of this world.

LEARN THE WAY OF THE FORCE

Dr Ken Fox is principal lecturer at the school of media, art and design at Christ Church University in Canterbury. He explains why he believed *Star Wars* strikes such a chord.

I STILL think the original *Star Wars* is a western in space.

Studios still try to follow that today - sometimes they succeed and sometimes not. *Star Wars* created a magic that has been hard to better.

That significant audience connection is essential to make the entire industry that has grown up around the films a money maker. The franchising attached to it has made more money than the films themselves, but that doesn't all happen by accident. The films draw in audiences of all ages.

It has the right characters and was released at just the right time as audiences were looking for the big blockbuster again.

There are three key areas that were responsible for it being the success it was.

It was a family film on a huge scale. I know there had been plenty of other family films, but



CULTURE: The original *Star Wars* was released in 1977 and became not only the biggest grossing movie of all time, but captured the imagination like nothing before or since.

this was different. It was the way the story was crafted that created a universe we had not seen before.

What *Star Wars* managed to capture is that fantastic wide spread of adults going to the cinema with their children. The demographic was so much wider than before, and so that was the foundation of a great business model, that even enabled repeat viewing. That is something Hollywood is still doing now.

It became the highest grossing movie of all time taking over from *Jaws*.

The studios saw there was less risk by putting a lot of money into a blockbuster than smaller amounts

of money into lots of projects.

The third area, I would say is important, is the development of special effects cinema. George Lucas created Industrial Light and Magic to do this work. They are the forerunners of the huge special effects we see today.

Now Disney is taking this story on to a new audience and had the vision to use JJ Abrams as the master of the reboot as he did so well with *Star Trek*.

Keeping the original characters intact was a masterstroke. And now we have *The Force Awakens*, and I would imagine there will be a lot of dads taking their children along to see the *Star Wars* universe for the first time.

501st Legion (Vader's First) Kent Garrison consists of devoted fans who like nothing more than dressing up in authentic *Star Wars* garb and appearing at big events.

They made a recent appearance at an exhibition of *Star Wars* memorabilia at Canterbury's Beaneys. When KoS rang, however, they said they were "too busy" to talk. They proba-

bly preferred to use the Force instead.

***Star Wars VII: The Force Awakens* goes on general release across the world on Thursday, December 17.**

THE FORCE IS STRONG IN KENT

AMID the harsh blacks and greys of the dreaded Death Star – the evil Empire's ultimate battle station and star of the original 1977 movie – the legendary actor Peter Cushing was padding about in a pair of comfy slippers.

The thespian, who lived for many years in Whitstable and died in 1994 in Canterbury, was one of the few recognised stars to appear in the film.

But on set he had struggled with the pair of boots the costume department had made for his character. Unable to conjure up a replacement he was primarily filmed in close-up – thus allowing him to pad about the control room in more comfortable footwear.

Fellow actors struggled not to smirk at the site of the esteemed performer – renowned for being a gentleman – as he ordered the destruction of Princess Leia's home planet.

His scenes were powerful too; stood alongside Darth Vader, to showcase the devastating power of the Death Star.

Mr Cushing had been movie creator George Lucas' first choice for the role of Grand Moff Tarkin – one of the highest ranked officials on the evil Empire. So powerful, indeed, he outranked Darth Vader.

"After we started designing the costumes," Mr Lucas said, "and I saw what Darth Vader looked like, I felt I really needed a human villain, too,

because you can't see Darth Vader's face. I got a little nervous about it, so I wanted somebody really strong, a really good villain – and actually Peter Cushing was my first choice on that."

Mr Cushing, however, claimed he was first approached to play Obi Wan Kenobi – the Jedi Master eventually portrayed by Sir Alec Guinness.

Regardless, his role may have been relatively brief, but it remains one of the fans' favourites. What's more, his character is set to be digitally revived for spin-off movie *Rogue One* which is currently in production.

For an actor so well regarded by his contemporaries, it is perhaps little surprise he proved a hit on set.

He was adored by the young Carrie Fisher (Princess Leia) who was just 19 when she started shooting the movie in 1975.

Among her first scenes were those with Mr Cushing in his slippers.

Famously, when she refers to the character's "foul stench", she said the actor actually smelled of "linen and lavender".

Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker), may not have shared any scenes with him, but made a point of seeking him out and asking for his autograph.

Although initially a little unsure about the film, he was delighted with the end result and just regretted his character was killed off and thus unable to appear in the sequels.



New Year Business Resolutions

New Year is a hopeful time of year filled with endings and new beginnings, with aspirations and hope for change. Most companies make New Year's resolutions or plans, but unfortunately the number of those that are actually successful is dismal at best.

May be we need to ask a few questions

● Are you setting your expectations too high?

As a business consultant I can work with you and together we can set realistic goals, in increments, so you don't nose dive too quickly.

● Are your goals measurable, not vague ambition?

As a business consultant I can work with you and together we can plan to reduce costs, target additional sectors to increase sales and maximise profitability.

● Most importantly are your employees disciplined and motivated?

Without the right people who share your vision, are in roles that deliver their best and are happy to go that extra mile, your New Year Business Resolution may not ever be successful.

If you would like my support please feel free to get in touch using the details below.

I am more than happy to arrange an initial chat to assess how best I can help you.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR!

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LOCALS: Peter Cushing, as Moff Tarkin, left, Oliver Ford Davies in the prequel trilogy and Kenny Baker inside his most famous role - the droid R2-D2, pictured above with C3PO - which has appeared in all six of the previous Star Wars movies.

Peter Cushing, who lived in a pretty seafront property in Whitstable and after whom 'Cushing's View' is named nearby, died in 1994 at the Pilgrims' Hospice in Canterbury. He was 81.

He was far from the only Kent link to the films.

Also appearing on the Dark Side was Kenneth Colley. Now 78, the actor, who lives in Hythe, appeared in both the Empire Strikes Back and

Return of the Jedi.

A regular at Star Wars conventions around the world, he reprised the role of Admiral Piett in the animated Lego version of the movie.

His other major claim to fame was playing Jesus in Monty Python's Life of Brian.

More recent roles include characters in Foyle's War, Vera and Misfits.

Brian Wheeler is currently

appearing as one of the seven dwarfs in Snow White at Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre. But a little over 30 years ago he was portraying an Ewok on the planet of Endor in Return of the Jedi.

Oliver Ford Davies is an actor and writer who has written a book on the portrayal of Shakespeare's King Lear and won a Laurence Olivier Award for his work on the stage.

But, as with all things Star Wars, it

will be his role in the three Star Wars prequels he will be perhaps best known.

The 76-year-old actor grew up in Kent - attending Canterbury's King's School before landing a place at Oxford University.

He portrayed Sio Bibble in the Phantom Menace, Attack of the Clones and Revenge of the Sith.

But perhaps the best known link to the county is through none-other

than R2-D2 - the little droid which won the hearts of millions.

Inside with Kenny Baker - the diminutive actor who found himself squeezed into the tiny tin can for many of the scenes.

Now aged 81, he attended a boarding school in Kent before going to live with his stepmother in Hastings.



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Do Santa and co sparkle in Dreamland's festive guise?

Chris Britcher pays a visit to Margate's revived leisure park as it transforms into the Frosted Fairground for Christmas during what has been a traumatic week

COMING up with a Christmas 'experience' has been a familiar theme over the last decade.

Why allow just snowy Lapland to benefit from the festive tourist trade when you can create something right here in gloomy old Britain?

While Hyde Park's Winter Wonderland has emerged as the market leader – blending free entry with premium events and a host of food,

drink and gift stalls – Kent has dipped its toe in the marketplace over recent years too.

Who can forget Lapland UK at Bewl Water in Lamberhurst? A sickly sweet and, let's be honest, horrifically expensive, day out that, somewhat ironically, found itself in trouble when real snow fell, causing it a financial headache even Santa and his elves couldn't fix.

But now we have something rather refreshingly different to help whip

up the festive spirit. Dreamland's Frosted Fairground doesn't require a second mortgage for a family to attend – which in the weeks leading up to Christmas is, surely, a prerequisite for any budget-conscious clan – and offers plenty of thrills and spills.

Dreamland has the rarest of appeals after all – perhaps one which encapsulates the festive season – in that it relies so much on that intoxicating blend of nostalgia we all relish so much.

The Margate venue has created headlines for all the wrong reasons this week as the extent of its debt was revealed amid concerns over its long term viability. All of which means it needs the likes of this transformation to pull people through the gates.

For anyone aged 40 or over – and that's most parents and grandparents – Dreamland conjures up memories of childhood in the best possible way. It lives in our memories as a fun factory; where the sun always shone and the days were packed with smiles and excitement. Much like our Christmas memories.

The result is that it is already primed to attract the crowds. And after a month when it was closed to the public, the park is back in its Frosted Fairground guise. And when KoS paid it a visit last weekend it reminded young and old alike that you don't need the latest hi-tech whiz-bangs to make for a memorable day out.

As (admittedly fake) snow drifted across a somewhat blustery Margate, along with suitably festival music, the crowds grew from a trickle to a flood as the day progressed.



And it really does deliver a great day out. There were squeals of delight from young and old alike on the rides, while the live music from the outside stages to The Ballroom went hand-in-hand with the likes of the roller disco area.

There was certainly plenty to do, with story telling, cooking demos, and even panto characters roaming the site.

You can take a stroll back in time with the arcade machines and pinballs from through the years and there were plenty of stalls (although perhaps not quite as many as expected) offering gifts and items, as well as plenty of food and drink stands too.

Of course, no festive day out is the same without Father Christmas in



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CHALLENGE: Dreamland needs the likes of the Frosted Fairground to work to allow it to remain viable

attendance – and he welcomes good boys and girls in his grotto.

Firstly, entry into the park is free – the normal per person entry and ride-all-day charge is on hold for the festive season – and a pay-per-ride system is in operation.

So, while, conceivably, you could soak up the atmosphere for free, the chances are you'll want to relive memories by taking a ride on the Scenic Railway or get an aerial view of Margate from the vertigo-inducing 35-metre high Big Wheel.

That dropped entry fee will be recouped here, it's fair to say. A ride on the all-wooden Scenic Railway as it rattles up and down its historic, but

completely reconstructed, frame will set you back five tokens each. And with a token costing £1, a family of four will be paying £20 for all to ride.

But then you are travelling on that rarest of things – a rollercoaster which dominates the park yet doesn't make you unable to walk when you stagger off it.

The Big Wheel will set you back the equivalent of £4 a ride – but is worth it as it elevates you above the park affording fabulous views of the surrounding area, from the nearby rail station and across the sea to where a flurry of large boats could be seen carrying their cargo en route, one assumes, up the Thames.

Now, granted, there are a whole host of other, cheaper rides to enjoy, and if you're happy – as so many parents and grandparents are – to let the younger visitors enjoy the rides then you can save that ride cash for a glass of wine instead.

But, it should be stressed, the better memories are generated when you're all doing it together.

The simple pleasures of the Dodgems are a good example of why the older attractions are so often the best.

But perhaps the biggest thing that makes Dreamland stand out from the crowd is the people it clearly targets and who clearly flock to it.

One can only assume the streets of

PARADE: There was plenty for all age groups at the seaside attraction

the capital were a little quieter as the make-up of so many of those visiting seemed to be the DfL – the Down from Londoner – who, it must be admitted, is exactly the sort of person Margate wants to get back down here bringing their disposable income and penchant for a seaside property with them.

It creates a peculiarly middle-class atmosphere which for many will be music to their ears – but for many may suggest a rather more measured mood than perhaps would otherwise be in existence.

Odd for somewhere which was once such a refuge for all classes back in the day.

Regardless, Dreamland's strength is that amid its modesty is that it has created a niche for itself – the retro fairground drenched in its own history.

Frosted Fairground is something genuinely different than all other festive attractions and for that alone, Kent should be rather proud.

It's great fun and something that really will put a smile on the face of all family members. And that's what Christmas is surely all about?

■ **Frosted Fairground at Dreamland in Margate runs until January 3. Entry to the park is free. Each ride requires differing numbers of tokens. Each token costs £1. Members ride for free.**



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Business Review

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For all of your fencing needs Orchard can offer the lot

INCREASINGLY, we are becoming aware of the need to have our gardens and land protected by top quality fencing - not just to keep folk out, but to enjoy and protect our gardens, and property, from the elements.

But just where do you go to get an assurance of top quality? The answer is Orchard Fencing.

The family-run company has been carefully nurtured over the years since being founded in 1989.

Now in its 25th year of trading, the owners can look back on its modest start with pride.

Boss Neil Hubble said: "We started out with one place in Welling and with the help of my wife Karen, we managed to grow the business so it is now covering three branches.

"We still have the original in Welling, but had since managed to add Erith and then Catford over the years."

The company doesn't install its fencing, but it does manufacturers bespoke trellis gates and panels.

Among its products, Orchard Fencing offer a range of domestic, industrial and agricultural fencing.

From panels to palisades, the company offers a wide variety of products for all sorts of fencing needs.

Orchard Fencing is also a major importer of mesh, chainlink, weldmesh

and gate fittings, providing a full range of each.

Customers who are unable to get to any of the trio of branches are catered for because all three also do deliveries.

Neil said: "When we started out, we wanted a motto. We settled on 'all types, huge stocks, low prices'.

"That is still just as true as it was the day we started. This was, and remains, a family business.

"Myself and Karen, as co-directors, still run the Erith branch."

Orchard Fencing is a supplier to councils and housing associations along with trade and retail customers. He said it is a competitive

field, but sticking to their motto means the branches drive each other on to find ways of providing the very best service in the area.

Neil said: "We are known for being a one stop supplier and like to think our volume and variation of stock is second to none in this part of Kent and even south east London."

With three different sites, Orchard Fencing are easily accessible and have something offer any type of customer, whether it's for some DIY in the garden, or for industrial or agricultural work.

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Providing stable homes for young people for 18 years

SINCE the nineties, Chrysalis Care has been providing high quality, foster care for children and young people and has been committed to transforming their lives for the better, believing that children deserve the very best opportunities in life.

This vision was set out by the founding Directors, Lynda and Lou Boden, who themselves previously fostered for 15 years.

The Directors Allé Pflaumer and Sarah Boden-de Mel have continued to carry out the visionary care service that their parents created and this year Chrysalis Care proudly marks its 18th year.

That's 18 years of helping children and young people to experience a caring, nurturing family life.

When looking for potential foster carers, Chrysalis Care welcomes applicants from a variety of backgrounds, as this increases the likelihood of a stable placement match.

The stability and progress of children and young people is a priority at Chrysalis Care and this is reflected in their Ofsted Inspection, where they have rated 'Outstanding' for the progression and outcomes for children and young people.

Chrysalis Care's diverse foster carer team cater to a range of needs, whether caring for babies, parent and

child, infants, teenagers, or a child with disabilities, the service is dedicated to providing a brighter, stable family environment for all children and young people. Whatever the reason for being in the care system, Chrysalis Care works hard to make sure the needs of children and young people are met in a safe environment.

This may include therapeutic intervention, such as Art Therapy or Psychotherapy, educational support, mentoring or life story work, amongst other services.

Foster carers work alongside fully qualified social workers who are there to offer support, advice and guidance every step of the way.

With the help of Chrysalis Care's support, guidance, training and 24-hour, 365 days 'on call' facility, Chrysalis Care foster carers provide children and young people with a nurturing, stable environment, helping to improve all aspects of their lives.

The service is always looking for foster carers with open minds and open hearts who truly want to make a difference to the lives of children and young people. If you are interested in becoming a foster carer, contact 0208 2982800, email info@chrysaliscare.org and visit www.chrysaliscarefostering.org



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If you are considering becoming a foster carer, or would like to find out more about us,
Please Call: 020-8298 2800 or visit our website: www.chrysaliscarefostering.org

Family furniture store offers generations of experience

LUKEHURST has been providing a range of home furnishing products for more than 40 years.

Across three generations, the Rainham and Sittingbourne-based business has provided all manner of furnishings to make your home as comfortable and personal to you as possible, by offering bedroom, living, and dining room furniture, as well as beds, carpets, curtains and blinds.

Turn your living room into the relaxing place it should be, with sofas and chairs tailored to suit every style, along with coffee tables, television cabinets, lamp tables, sideboards and bookcases to create the perfect living room in your home.

The business' expert buyers travel the world to find the most stunning works for you to put into your home.

Whether you are looking for a traditional dining table with matching dining chairs, or something altogether more contemporary, Lukehurst will have the perfect dining set for you.

They have dining tables in a range of finishes and woods, including solid oak, pine, teak, mahogany and painted ranges with matching chairs.

Whether you're settling into your first home or building for the future, bedroom furniture is available in a range of sizes, offering single to super

king size beds, and up to nine-drawer chests, as well as a beautiful selection of cupboards and wardrobes.

Lukehurst is the place to shop for flooring in Kent. In addition to its huge carpet collection, the store also offers wooden flooring catering to all tastes, both laminate and real wood.

Every aspect of their service guarantees high levels of customer satisfaction. Their carpet and flooring showrooms are on Orchard Street, Rainham and Bargebrick House, Eurolink Way, Sittingbourne.

Window dressings can make or break a room.

Blinds and curtains are the perfect finishing touch and serve a practical use. Lukehurst's soft furnishing department provides made to measure blinds and curtains.

To help complement your new curtains, they also offer coordinating wallpaper, poles, tracks and blinds, and cushion covers.

At Lukehurst, staff let you take as much time as you need and help advise and assist in choosing the perfect piece of furniture for your home.

So for an expert, experienced, local opinion, with value for money, why not pop into any of Lukehurst's showrooms? You can find stores in High Street Rainham and the new store on Eurolink Way Sittingbourne.



STYLISH: Lukehurst's showrooms boast a range of stylish furniture

Lukehurst

82-84 High Street
Rainham
ME8 7JH

Tel: 01634 387234
www.lukehurst.co.uk



NEW STORE Bargebrick House, Eurolink Way, Sittingbourne ME10 3HH Tel: 01795 430299

High Street, Rainham ME8 7JH. Tel: 01634 236956 Or buy on line @ lukehurst.co.uk



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DURESTA



Maidstone accountants with experience and expertise

WITH its roots firmly fixed in Kent, DSH offers a wide range of accountancy and business advice services.

Among these services are strategic tax advice and planning, audit and accounting, financial services, payroll and much more.

Their client base extends not only across Kent, but also further afield in the UK and abroad.

They cater to thousands of business and personal clients, each of which has a unique and diverse set of demands and requirements.

Its business clients are drawn from a broad base of business sectors from agriculture to zoos.

DSH's growing team come from a range of backgrounds, and staff can provide a variety of both general and specialist business advice.

They work with start ups and growing businesses, and also have extensive experience of working with larger firms including many well-known names.

All of this experience enables them to support your business as you aim to grow.

The firm dates back to 1922, and its lengthy stay in Maidstone has seen it retain many clients for generations, even through the toughest of economic times.

The firm's local ethos is main-



EXPERIENCE: Dating back more than 90 years, DSH have experience in a range of fields to offer you advice you can trust.

tained by keeping an active role in the local community.

Through its support of a range of causes such as the Kent Foundation, Young Lives Foundation and the Heart of Kent Hospice, the firm continues to contribute to the great Kentish community.

DSH continually recruits outstanding individuals to join its team of accountants, specialist advisers and support staff. Priding their success on the excellence of its staff, the

firm offers extensive training to help young budding accountants and others develop their technical and all important people skills.

General practice partner Marc Farmer praised the team atmosphere at the practice. He said: "Even though we have 80 to 90 members of staff, there's very much a family atmosphere about the practice. Our clients often remark on how friendly we are. That's what everyone tries to be as they cater to the needs

of the client. We have an advantage over larger companies who don't have the expertise or experience to deal with the many different needs of smaller businesses."

Whatever the type of business, whatever the size, DSH can offer a wealth of experienced, expert and local advice.

All of this is accessible from one of Kent's most picturesque towns, so why not pop in to their Maidstone offices today?

DSH

Globe House, Eclipse Park
Sittingbourne Road,
Maidstone
ME14 3EN

Tel: 01622 690666
www.dsh.co.uk



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JD Security Ltd protect your home and business

JD Security Ltd is a privately owned, family run business with a core business ethic that reflects a genuine commitment to a quality and cost effective service.

We have a robust and effective management infrastructure which allows us to respond to the changing needs of our clients.

All out staff members are SIA (Security Industry Authority) Licensed.

Small businesses have to deal with the reality that theft and other crimes can occur on business premises. Some businesses, such as convenience stores, banks and retail stores may be more of a target for criminals and petty thieves than other types, but a wide variety of businesses choose to hire security guards.

Guards can be used to prevent crime, maintain security, and assist customers and employees.

The presence of a security guard at a business can provide peace of mind and a sense of security to the business owner, employees and customers.

We provide, Access Control Services, Event Management and Stewarding, Concierge staff for both corporate and general front of house environments such as private events hosted by studios and NHS clinics.

Additional to our Manned Guarding services we provide Dog Handlers.

All our dog handlers are carefully vetted and fully trained by the BIPDT (British Institute of Professional Dog Trainers) and NASDU (National Association of Security Dog Users).

JD Security is recognised as a local specialist supplier for security dog services.

Dog Handler teams are a vital resource when providing security for large construction sites, warehouse and industrial areas and even for residential area patrols.

We provide general purpose Security Dog Handlers, Mobile Patrol Dog Handler Teams and Event/Crowd Safety Dog Handlers.

2016 is going to be an extremely busy time for us, as we move into the CCTV & Alarm monitoring marketed under our sister brand Cyber Watch Ltd. Having a monitored alarm system will act as a deterrent for burglars, Cyber Watch supply, install and monitor from our purpose built control room based in Whitstable.

Your current security needs may be adequately covered at present, but should you wish to consider a change at any point in the future, please contact us for a free no obligation survey of your existing security arrangements. At JD Security & Cyber Watch client confidentiality is guaranteed.



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Centre Management Suite
Bath Street
Gravesend
Kent
DA11 0TA

Tel: 01474 332031
stgeorgescentre.co.uk/



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www.jdsecurity.co.uk

CCTV in operation

Maidstone's best kept secret escape offers refined luxury

OAKWOOD House is a grand Victorian mansion located just off the Tonbridge Road in Maidstone.

A first-class venue for conferences, functions, weddings, events and accommodation. Oakwood House offers a dramatic fusion of modern and traditional styles suitable for every occasion.

Oakwood House is managed by Genuine Hotels, which is part of The Genuine Dining Company, who also orchestrate fantastic events at Heatherden Hall, Pinewood Studios and The Old House, Shepperton Studios under their Genuine Events brand www.genuine-events.co.uk.

The Victorian mansion's deep-rooted history is clear for all to see, combining classic architecture and period features together with a sense of contemporary living throughout the interior of the building.

Quite simply, a fitting venue for all events or occasions, the hotel is just five minutes' walk from Maidstone town centre.

The house boasts 40 stylish bedrooms and 18 meeting rooms including the John Wigan Room, which can cater for up to 300 guests.

Each of the 40 rooms has a private en-suite facility, a flat screen television and beverage making facilities, so that your comfort and relaxation

are guaranteed.

The Courtyard bar is open daily, serving delicious Mozzo blend coffees as well as a selection of locally sourced food.

There is free WiFi throughout the building and free parking for more than 250 cars, providing a great location for meetings with colleagues and clients.

This year the venue is delighted to be hosting more than 50 wedding ceremonies and receptions, along with a number of high school proms, birthday parties and themed events.

On top of all of this, the hotel will be welcoming more than 3,000 guests over the Christmas period.

Following this year's success, Oakwood House's next wedding fair will take place on February 21 2016 from 10am to 4pm.

The fair will showcase all of the history and beauty that the house has to offer.

With a strong food philosophy, the hotel's restaurant, The Billiard Room, launched in the summer, and offers great views across the gardens.

Locally referred to as Maidstone's hidden secret, the house is easily accessible from London via the M25, M2 and M20 and is within easy reach of the Channel Tunnel and the south coast.



REFINED: The Victorian mansion is perfect for any event

Oakwood House

Oakwood Park
Maidstone
Kent ME16 8AE

Tel: 01622 620720

www.oakwoodhousehotel.co.uk



Packages
available from
£3112.50

Oakwood House

for weddings as individual as you

A grand Victorian mansion set in private tree-lined gardens offering experienced staff, elegant rooms, exquisite menus and lavish accommodation. Oakwood House is simply the perfect venue for your wedding.

- A dedicated team of Wedding Coordinators to help you plan your dream day
- Inclusive Wedding Packages to ease your planning
- Ceremony and reception suites are available for intimate and large parties of up to 300 guests
- Stunning gardens with fantastic photographic opportunities
- 40 stylish and contemporary bedrooms are available for you and your guests
- Fresh local produce, fine wines and full bar facilities

Discounts on late dates for 2015/16

Your Package will include:

- Private function room for your wedding breakfast and evening reception
- A dedicated Wedding Coordinator and Banqueting Manager (who will act as your Master of Ceremonies on the day)
- 1 reception drink per guest on arrival • 3-course wedding breakfast with coffee and mints
- 2 glasses of house wine per guest during the meal • A glass of sparkling wine for the toast
- Crisp white table linen and napkins • Cake stand and knife • Evening Finger Buffet for your day guests
- A complimentary superior bedroom for the bride and groom for the night of the wedding
- Discounted accommodation rates for your guests (subject to availability)

Friday & Saturday price covers 70 guests: Sunday price covers 50 guests Extra guests can be added at the prices below

Fridays - £4,672.50 - available on: 8, 29 January, 5, 12, 19, 26 February, 4, 18, 25 March, (usually £5,530.00)

Additional day guests charged at £63pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50pp

Saturdays - £4,935.00 - available on: 16, 23, 30 January, 6, 13, 20, 27 February, 5, 12, 19, 26 March (usually £5,810.00)

Additional day guests charged at £66pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50pp

Sundays - £3,112.50 - available on: 10, 17, 24, 31 January, 7, 14, 21, 28 February, 6, 13, 27 March (usually £3,600.00)

Additional day guests charged at £58pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50pp.

All dates subject to availability at time of enquiry



Wedding Fayre
21st February
2016
from 10am.

No order is too big or too small with AMS Workwear

AT Andrews Marelen Supplies, no workwear order is too large, too small or too specific.

Based in the Premier business park in Chatham, AMS Workwear is a local, family-run business with a newly refurbished store and Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) system.

This ensures that everything is in place for smooth, easy transactions, so purchasing your workwear is as stress-free as possible.

Providing a range of personal protection equipment from hazard-proof clothing to helmets and gloves, there is something for all your workwear needs.

Personalisation is also provided and all printing is done in house, including embroidery, vinyl, direct to garment and screen printing, all tailored to your requirements.

Established in 1997, AMS Workwear prides itself on its customer service, meaning you can come in and talk to friendly members of staff who will strive to deliver exactly the type of artwork needed for your business equipment or, if you prefer, funny t-shirts for stag and hen parties.

Its one-to-one service is something of a unique selling point for AMS Workwear, and what sets it apart from other businesses in the workwear market.

AMS Workwear has supplied to Medway council for more than four years, as well as a number of firms - both large and small.

Mid-Kent College have also been supplied across 13 departments over its Medway and Maidstone campuses.

No order is too large or too small for AMS Workwear - it has previously provided equipment for individual builders popping into the store, or massive orders of 3,000 for local schools wanting to get students fully kitted out - either way, catering for your needs is not a problem.

Similarly, there are no limits to the type of stock that AMS Workwear can deliver, as it works with a number of big suppliers like Dickies, Regatta, Portwest, Brook Taverner and Uneek, to ensure your workwear needs can be met.

Manager Colin Gentle said: "We're supplied by well-respected organisations, so customers can come to us confident that we know what we're talking about, and that we'll have what they're looking for."

A sophisticated ordering system is available online at www.amsworkwear.co.uk, where a delivery service is available.

Alternatively, why not pop in, chat to its well-trained staff, and see what AMS Workwear can do for you?



EQUIPMENT: A range of workwear is available in store

AMS Workwear

5 Premier Business Park
Second Avenue
Chatham
Kent
ME4 5EQ

Tel: 01634 815015
www.amsworkwear.co.uk

AMS WORKWEAR

01634 815015
01634 828028

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YOUR LOGO IS OUR BUSINESS! No client too big or small

Trusted suppliers of
Medway Council & Mid Kent College

5 Premier Business Park ■ 2nd Avenue ■ Chatham ■ ME4 5EQ

Drive in style with a Maserati from Kent's only dealership

A FAMILY-run business formed in 1972, the Motorline Group has now become the largest of its kind in the south east.

From the first Toyota franchise in Canterbury, awarded in June 1976, Motorline now represents ten car brands - Volkswagen, Toyota, Lexus, Renault, Dacia, Hyundai, Peugeot, Skoda, Nissan and Maserati - dealing both new and used cars, as well as all the aftersales services you would expect from a main car dealer.

The growth of the business has accelerated significantly in recent years, however, and January 2014 saw the opening of Kent's only Maserati dealership in Maidstone.

Here, customers can see a range of stunning luxury sports cars at its state-of-the-art showroom, which, following a major redevelopment, was completed in the early part of 2015.

Motorline's Maserati dealership in Maidstone offers exceptional levels of customer service and complete aftersales services including routine servicing, MOT, repairs, parts and warranty requirements.

Highly trained and skilled technicians use only manufacturer-approved genuine parts, so you know



MASERATI: A range of luxury new and used cars are available from Motorline's new Maidstone showroom

you're getting a safe, reliable service. Maserati's mission statement is to "build ultra-luxury performance automobiles with timeless Italian style, accommodating bespoke interiors, and effortless, signature sounding power," and that is precisely what is on offer at Motorline's Maidstone dealership.

All of Motorline's used cars go through rigorous and thorough safety checks before they are offered for sale, meaning every product

available offers the quality, value and peace of mind that you would expect from a well-established dealer group.

Once you've found your new or used Maserati, Motorline's small group of friendly sales executives are on hand to help find the best possible finance package from a range of established finance providers.

Part-exchange is also offered against your existing vehicle,

meaning staff can give you a valuation, which can then be put towards your deposit.

A range of cars, and further details is available on Motorline's website at <http://www.motorline.co.uk/maserati>.

Open from 8.30am until 6pm Monday to Saturday and by appointment on Sunday, you can visit the new Maserati showroom on Bircholt Road, and pick the luxury car to suit you.

Motorline Maserati

Bircholt Road
Parkwood
Maidstone
ME15 9XY

Tel: 01622 233111
www.motorline.co.uk/maserati

THE HEAD SAYS
YES.
THE HEART SAYS
DEFINITELY, YES.



MOTORLINE MASERATI

BIRCHOLT ROAD
MAIDSTONE, ME15 9XY
PHONE: 01622 233111
Web: www.motorline.co.uk/maserati

Official fuel consumption figures for Maserati Ghibli range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 20.5 (13.8) - 37.2 (7.6), Extra Urban 39.8 (7.1) - 56.5 (5.0), Combined 29.4 (9.6) - 47.9 (5.9). CO₂ emissions 223 - 158 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures are based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.



MASERATI

Ghibli

Affordable and premium tile ranges are at CAF Ceramics

SEARCHING for the perfect tile to suit your kitchen or bathroom can be a long-winded task, waiting days for the tile to arrive in store, only to decide it's not quite right.

But at CAF Ceramics, the majority of tiles are stocked in store, meaning you could see the perfect tile to suit your room and walk away with them the very same day.

Its showroom offers customers an alternative to mainstream tile stores, displaying a wide range of quality ceramic and porcelain tiles.

When you walk into the Aylesford showroom, there is an extensive range of collections exclusive to CAF.

Many of the exclusive tiles available are imported directly from Italy, with guaranteed quality.

As well as the Italian imports, the store also offers a range of attractive, affordable Spanish imported tiles to its customers, meaning the finishing touch on your walls and floors could be within your price range.

In the relaxed environment shoppers can wander undisturbed, but feel safe in the knowledge that CAF's knowledgeable team is always on hand to offer advice and perhaps inspiration when needed.

Invaluable guidance from such professionals ensures that any room will achieve its natural beauty by

combining a range of tile designs, colours and sizes.

Ranging from ceramic, porcelain and glass mosaic patterned tiles, the extensive range available at CAF means every customer is bound to fall in love with a tile. The only difficulty will be picking which one to choose.

Boasting easy access from the M20, the showroom has plenty of free parking available, meaning a pressure-free experience from start to finish.

Whether it's for DIY or trading, CAF Ceramics offer all the tiling items, including tile cutters and grout, to get the job done with precision and care.

From a range of affordable, stylish tiles to premium ceramics and porcelain, CAF Ceramics have what every homeowner is looking for - top quality products in a convenient location and a stress-free environment.

The store also offers under floor heating accessories, as well as cleaning equipment, to keep your tiles looking fresh after they're installed, allowing you to furnish your room around your new tiling.

Offering free local delivery for orders over £350 and the chance to set up a trade account, CAF Ceramics cater to the needs of their customers, but ultimately let you make the decision on what will best suit your home.



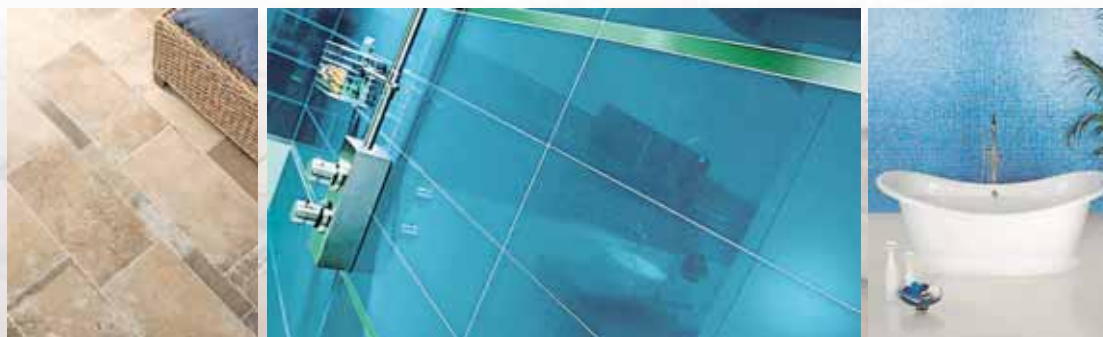
TILES: Each tile at CAF Ceramics provides a top quality finish

CAF Ceramics

Unit 5 2M Trade Park
Beddow Way
Aylesford
ME20 7BT

Tel: 01622 717107
www.cafceramics.co.uk

Exclusive tile collection



**CAF Ceramics
& Stone Ltd**

Tiles to inspire

Units 5 2M Trade Park Beddow Way Aylesford Kent ME20 7BT

Tile Showroom: 01622 717107

e: info@cafceramics.co.uk | www.cafceramics.co.uk

Classic and modern bikes available from Canterbury

SINCE the sixties Robinsons Foundry has been providing a top-quality range of motorcycles, cementing its place in the industry ever since.

First starting up in Broadstairs, the business acquired a Suzuki franchise in the 1970s, beginning the journey to become one of the country's leading motorbike suppliers.

Staying true to its Kentish roots, Robinsons Foundry moved on from Broadstairs and moved to its Canterbury site in 1990, and has now been based there for 25 years.

With nearly half a century's worth of experience, the company's growth has continued year-on-year, as they now sell a broad range of some of the best motorbikes money can buy, as well as the more affordable.

Among this assortment of bikes, Robinsons Foundry sell a selection of ranges including Victory, Indian and Suzuki, motorcycles.

The family-run business has gone from strength to strength, and their ever-growing showroom offers everything from a 50cc scooter to an 1800cc tourer.

The company always stay up to date with the latest bikes on the road, keeping an eye on international shows to make sure the best is on offer at the Canterbury site.

Following the Milan motorcycle show in November, the team at Robinsons Foundry can offer a range of new bikes.

Among the new releases shown at the show and now available from Robinsons was the Indian Scout 60.

Boasting a new 999cc, liquid cooled V-Twin engine and five-speed gearbox, the Scout 60 promises to be a hit with any bike enthusiast.

Another new release to feature at the Canterbury showroom will be the GSX-R1000 L7, unveiled 11 years after the reveal of the now legendary sportsbike, the GSX-R1000 K5.

Catering to bike-builders, the firm is one of the country's biggest Suzuki parts suppliers in the country, as well as other parts for other motorbikes from past and present.

The Foundry also employ a team of fully employed, factory trained technicians, who can service most makes and do MOTs for all makes and models.

As well as the extensive range of new bikes, there is also a range of used bikes on offer at a range of affordable prices to help support anyone looking to get on board a bike.

It can offer an experienced, knowledgeable and trustworthy guide to buying a motorbike, and offers a range of parts and merchandise.



RANGE: Robinsons Foundry offer a range of new and old bikes, as well as parts for classic bikes dating back to the sixties

Robinsons Foundry

Broad Oak Road
Canterbury, Kent
CT2 7QG

Tel: 01227 378440
www.robinsonsfoundry.co.uk

New at Robinsons...



**Aprilia RSV4 RF From
£18,135 OTR**



**2016 Indian Roadmaster
From £21,995 OTR**



**Suzuki GSXR....
Coming soon!"**

aprilia



MOTO GUZZI



PIAGGIO

SUZUKI

VICTORY



Broad Oak Road, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7QG
www.robinsonsfoundry.co.uk 01227 378430

Rapidly growing Canterbury business looking to expand

IN less than 10 years, Canterbury's Buy Wholefoods Online has gone from an online startup to a big local success story.

Now the wholefoods seller is looking to keep on growing, after turning over more than £7million in the last year.

Catering to a wealth of clients, the popular online food service continues to look to the future, as it searches for new premises while it uses a temporary warehouse to stock the in demand items.

While the business is looking to continue its expansion to provide for new customers, it does not want to leave its roots in Canterbury.

Led by two cousins, Buy Wholefoods Online combines strong industry knowledge and experience with a keen eye for marketing, to make sure each product caters to the needs of the customer.

Keeping strong connections to the local community, the company works together with local business Canterbury Wholefoods to provide wholefoods in store as well as online.

Together the company continues to push forward, run by an attentive team who work together to provide the best service possible.

Starting out from a garden shed, the store's owners juggled their new



TOGETHER: The growing team at Buy Wholefoods Online is based on a strong familial environment

business with existing day jobs, but continued to believe their hard work would pay off, and it has.

The store offers a full range of organically produced products, including chocolate, fresh bread, dried fruits, teas and many more.

Specialising in nutrient rich products and superfoods such as chia seeds and maca powder, they also cater for all sorts of dietary requirements including gluten-free, sugar-free, vegan and raw diets.

Every member of the team at Buy Wholefoods Online is dedicated to providing the range of healthy, clean eating foods available, following the dedication of the stores two owners, who have poured their hard work and passion into making this business a national success, even reinvesting their earnings at the start from other jobs, into the business' success.

The online store currently employs 50 local people from the sur-

rounding areas, exemplary of the company's ethics.

As the company carries on growing, its feet are planted firmly in Canterbury, with a strong respect and love for the popular Kentish city, coupled with its hunger to keep succeeding in the market.

If you are local to Canterbury, a similar range of products are available at the Canterbury Wholefoods shop. Visit or call Canterbury Wholefoods on 01227 464623.

**Buy Whole Foods
Online**

www.buywholefoodsonline.co.uk

**EAT
DRINK**
and be *naturally*
MERRY.

have you found us yet?

Food intolerant?...detoxing?...or just fancy a change?

We stock delicious produce to suit you. With passionate staff to help and advise, we offer you the food choices you just cannot buy in the supermarkets!

Give the gift of natural this Christmas!

Canterbury
Wholefoods

Stop in for a coffee! **1-2 Jewry Lane,
Canterbury, Kent CT1 2NS**

01227 464623 • @cwfoods
www.canterbury-wholefoods.co.uk



Trusted financial planning is provided by LEBC specialists

FOR 15 years, LEBC Group has been providing sound, reliable financial advice for the 21st century.

Now the service has stretched its national reach into Kent, with an office in Maidstone to help provide individuals and businesses with financial planning for the future.

Offering tailor-made financial advice, LEBC's team of financial specialists work with their clients to establish long and short term goals, while explaining how much risk a client may want to take to get a return on their investments.

Setting up in Kent offers individuals and businesses the chance to avoid the trip to London, providing a local, experienced voice ready to listen to any plans or concerns each client may have.

The LEBC team in Kent has accumulated over 100 years of experience in complex financial planning and include specialists in inheritance tax planning, mortgages, investments, long-term care fee funding and protection.

LEBC are also at the forefront of pensions advice for individuals and businesses of all sizes across Kent with a looming auto-enrolment deadline.

LEBC aims to provide the best all round package to ensure businesses



FINANCIAL HEALTH: LEBC's financial advisors can help advise on the security and risk of your investments

meet their automatic enrolment duties.

Help and advice with pension reform legislation can include services such as new scheme set-up, existing scheme review, software solutions, payroll issues and employee communications.

Every piece of planning and all meetings will be held in a conversational and friendly way, as each financial advisor aims to get past the jargon and speak on a personal, un-

derstandable level.

With its bespoke service, which is tailored to suit each of its clients, the LEBC Group can provide advice that varies depending on your own personal needs and wants.

Inspiring, caring and trusted, LEBC offer the insight to understand the needs of today, and the foresight to meet requirements tomorrow.

The group prides itself on treating clients as people, and not someone

to sell to. Whether you're approaching retirement and need help assessing the array of options available, want to help your children or grandchildren attain their financial goals, looking to make money with a bespoke long term investment portfolio or would just like a financial MOT, the team of specialist advisers at LEBC's Maidstone office will offer an understandable, professional, and expert service.

LEBC Group

26 Kings Hill Avenue,
Kings Hill,
Maidstone
ME19 4AE

Tel: 0333 1362260
www.lebc-group.com
Email: Maidstone@
lebc-group.com

It's all about you

We create independent financial solutions for individuals and organisations alike.

Inspiring, caring and trusted, we have the insight to understand your needs today and the foresight to meet your requirements tomorrow.

“The team has proved trustworthy, pro-active, and understanding of our requirements.”

Goal Based Planning

If you are still working, we can help you plan ahead with tax-efficient investment portfolios, mortgages, pensions, school fees and protection for your family.

Later Life Planning

We are experts in helping you meet your goals as your needs change, and we can discuss flexible retirement options, care fee funding, inheritance tax planning and equity release.

Auto-enrolment

Is your business ready? We help companies of all sizes deal with the this daunting legislation. Our expertise covers low-cost options to more complex consultancy services.



New branch now open in Kent.
To find out more visit www.lebc-group.com



Farming machinery and top of the line trucks are on sale

FOR more than 30 years, one family-run business has been looking after farmers by providing the finest agricultural machinery.

Now Crawfords offer the same expertise across two different sites in the South East.

Over the past two years, Crawfords' newly developed premises, based in Charing, has pulled in a range of clients as they continue to offer some of the best machinery on the market.

Since opening the premises, the number of staff has more than tripled to cope with the demand for top-quality franchises including big names such as Isuzu and Valtra.

Wes Crawford said: "We initially brought in the Isuzu as just one part of our sales line.

"They're proving incredibly popular, they tow more than anything else on the market, and they're more fuel-efficient than anything else on the market."

The company, with its original premises still operating in Essex, offers a personal and friendly service to all of its clients.

Mr Crawford explained: "We offer a far more personal service to our clients compared to others.

"We stay with them afterwards to service the machinery, we don't just



RELIABLE: Crawfords provide reliable, efficient agricultural machinery for any farming needs as well as a range of top-quality Isuzu trucks.

forget about our customers after they've visited us once."

Crawford offer a range of different used and new equipment, including harvesters, tractors, trucks, trailers, sprayers, spreaders, guidance systems and all of the equipment needed to keep your machinery ticking over.

Visitors to Crawfords can even test drive the current Isuzu range, to ensure those looking for a truck from the top-quality range are sure

they've found the perfect one.

Whatever machinery or truck you are looking for, Crawfords boast a team of experienced, trained specialists in servicing and repair.

The business provides much of its machinery with a five-year warranty to ensure that every customer gets their money's worth.

Crawfords has seen a change in the market in recent years. While the bulk of clients are agricultural the business has noticed an in-

crease in people buying for leisure.

People have begun driving tractors for leisure, as people across the country continue to fall in with love all that the Great British countryside has to offer.

For business or pleasure, Crawfords can provide an excellent level of advice and customer service, catered to each customer's own individual needs.

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MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. [#]Official fuel figures for the Isuzu D-Max Blade Manual in mpg (l/100km): Urban 31.7 (8.9), Extra Urban 44.1 (6.4), Combined 38.7 (7.3). CO₂ emissions 192g/km. Blade Auto: Urban 26.9 (10.5), Extra Urban 39.2 (7.2), Combined 33.6 (8.4). CO₂ emissions 220g/km. For model specific figures please contact us directly or visit www.isuzu.co.uk
[†]Price shown is an Isuzu D-Max Blade Double Cab £25,999 CVT with manual transmission with choice of 'Aeroklas' Leisure Canopy or Black 'Mountain Top' roller cover with rear style bar, available in Pearl White or Cosmic Black. Automatic transmission also available at £26,999 CVT. Pearl White will be chargeable at £250 +VAT. Commercial vehicle on the road price includes delivery, number plates, 12 months road fund licence and first registration fee, excludes VAT. 5 year/125,000 miles (whichever comes first) warranty applies to all new Isuzu D-Max models. Finance options available at participating dealers, subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. www.isuzu.co.uk

Securing your future after graduation with GradsKent

KENT has some of the finest universities in the world to offer students, but when graduation looms, where to go next can be a tough choice. At GradsKent, students can see the wealth of opportunities the county has to offer, whether they've graduated or are currently studying.

The service, set up by Kent County Council in 2010, aims to keep young, talented individuals working in this great county - which offers a full range of opportunity.

For undergraduates still studying, the service even advertises internship opportunities, catering to the needs of all students.

GradsKent offers students the chance to prepare and apply for job interviews within the county, helping them work in one of the best locations in the UK.

By engaging with universities and job fairs, GradsKent's specialist service can demonstrate to students the range of job opportunities available in the Garden of England.

Whether it's engineering, construction, marketing or administration, students and graduates can find a wealth of career paths to choose from.

Some 600 businesses are registered with the site, which currently



OPPORTUNITY: The service aims to keep young, talented individuals working in the county

gains at least 70 new students looking for work a month.

In total, around 8,000 students have already started to benefit from the opportunities and advice GradsKent has to offer.

Providing an important and unique service to students in Kent, with a particular focus on higher education, this website is the perfect tool for students starting to worry about what the future may hold.

Not only is it exceedingly helpful, the service is also free to students, and offers advice including a range of checklists for CVs.

The website has job offers from a range of business sizes, so whether students are looking to go straight into the bigger world of business, or would prefer to work for small to medium sized companies, GradsKent has plenty of options.

For businesses across Kent, re-

gardless of size, GradsKent provides the opportunity to advertise job opportunities to graduates who have received the education that could match a range of job requirements.

Moving on from university can be a difficult change of environment, but with GradsKent, students can find the transition into working life that little bit easier, by seeing what jobs are available for them, in a county they already know well.

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Putting you in touch with the best

Adult boutique offers class for couples and singles alike

COUPLES looking for a classy environment to spice up their love life may find exactly what they're looking for at Vibez Adult Boutique.

The boutique offers an experience away from the high street, at Aylesford's 2M Trade Park.

With themed rooms, the boutique style shop offers a range of products, from lingerie to BDSM furniture, and anything in between.

In its lingerie department, Vibez offer a range of styles, including burlesque and vintage items.

Catering to all tastes, the store prides itself on its fabulous customer service and extensive range of the latest adult lifestyle products. The store is both couple and female-friendly.

Delivering a tasteful yet extensive service has led to the boutique being nominated for the best individual store category at the Erotic Trade Only Awards.

Among the many themed rooms within the boutique is a 50 Shades of Grey inspired room, for lovers of the film and book's content. There is also a dedicated BDSM room, as well as a range of products and furniture.

The company is now gearing up for the busiest three months on their calendar, as they continue to



CLASS: Vibez Adult Boutique offer a classy environment for adult shopping

make Christmas sales and begin preparing for Valentines Day in just two months.

They offer an extensive range of lingerie and toys, all of which are top quality and up-to-date with the latest trends, catering to single men and women, as well as couples.

The store's friendly staff welcome new customers to the store as they continue to cater to a full range of tastes and fetishes.

Online the store provides a live

chat service, where they can offer advice to their customers on finding or choosing one of the many products that Vibez has to offer.

Ordering online comes with a range of benefits, including discreet packaging and fast delivery. Vibez even offers free delivery for orders over £50, along with a free gift.

Even with its extensive range, staff at Vibez will offer to find anything that a customer may want that they do not already have in the

store - going above and beyond to help them find what they are looking for.

Above the boutique is a French styled vintage salon, and the store aims to offer the complete package to every customer that walks in.

With one of the country's best adult stores on your doorstep, why not pop into Vibez for a passionate, attentive customer experience.

Visit www.vibezadultboutique.co.uk for more details.

Vibez Adult Boutique

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Take vital steps before you light your first open fire of the winter

Emergency teams have seen a reduction in the number of chimney fires over recent years, but more than 1,300 blazes have been caused over the last four years alone in Kent. **Chris Murphy** investigates

IT IS the classic scene of a cosy, festive, winter treat – sat around a roaring open fire.

But as the temperature starts to tumble, fire chiefs are warning of the dangers of chimney fires – capable of not just causing huge damage to homes but of claiming victims too.

Every year Kent Fire and Rescue Service issues a similar warning – urging those considering lighting a fire in their homes to ensure their chimneys are thoroughly cleaned by a professional chimney sweep before the kindling is ignited.

But in the last four years there have been 1,340 in Kent alone.

Kent's firefighters say chimney fires in licensed premises, where places such as pubs can have fires running all day long for weeks during the winter months, were some of the most frequent call-outs.

And if the damage runs into thousands, it makes the modest chimney sweep cost seem a small price to have paid to avoid such drama.

A chimney fire's history is usually traced back to what has happened years before.

During cold winters, people will use their open fireplaces more often. That creates a build up of coal soot or wood tar.

That cools and sticks to the brickwork inside the chimney, well out of sight, often many feet up.

Fast forward to following years, and those deposits grow, until they are of sufficient volume that a fresh fire being lit below can create enough heat to actually ignite those deposits.

Kent fire service's community safety manager Charlie Smith said: "These chimney fires can sometimes be devastating to a home.

"In bad cases, it can create so much heat inside the chimney that the brickwork can be damaged and the flames can spread to whatever room the chimney is in. This includes the roof space and so an entire and very expensive roof could be destroyed."

Because smoke can no longer escape upwards, it will enter the property through the fireplace and create a lethal fog indoors.

Just a few breaths can render someone initially unconscious and eventually kill them where they lay.

But despite the number of incidents, the people of Kent seem to be getting the message and the numbers are on the decline.

In 2010, there were 338 chimney fires. It reduced to 250 in the following two years, but there was a sharp rise again in 2013 to 314. But last year was the best for a while with just 188.

KFRS's Charlie Smith said: "There are things a home owner can do. One is incredibly obvious and that is to have their chimney regularly



ALERT: Fire crews frequently receive chimney fire call-outs

cleaned. Fit a carbon monoxide alarm and ensure it is always working.

"And make sure only appropriate fuels are burned in the fireplace. A roaring noise that has never been there before can be an early indication a chimney is on fire, and in that case leave the property immediately and call 999. Being safe is the main priority, but preventing a chimney fire is essential."

Tony Sanders is a third generation chimney sweep and he charges just £40 in the Canterbury area.

He told us: "I suggest people get it done once a year, and it could save your life by preventing carbon monoxide, the silent killer, getting back into the house.

"Cleaning stops the build up of soot but I would also recommend the correct fuel is used. Don't use coal, it is mostly imported now and is not very clean and doesn't give off much heat.

"And don't put things like paper and crisp bags on the flames. They



DANGER: Real fires are a treat - but make sure you sweep your chimney

also just block up the chimney."

He said many people have had chimney fires and didn't know.

Mr Sanders, who runs Chimney Cleaners, said: "Most people don't even know if they have had a fire because it has been quite small. But it is possible the 2,000 degree heat could crack the chimney and come into the house.

"Even a slow burning chimney fire which hasn't been noticed can eventually cause massive damage and insurance companies often have it in

their policies that chimneys must be regularly cleared if they are to be used.

"So it is possible a major chimney fire happens and the home owner is left seriously out of pocket because they didn't spend their £40 for a clean and then created a chimney fire which wrecks their house.

"It is simply not worth the risk to property and life."

For more information and details visit the Kent Fire and Rescue service website at www.kent.fire-uk.org.

CHIMNEY SWEEP: HOW TO AVOID TROUBLE

CANTERBURY chimney sweep Tony Sanders said there are several causes of a chimney fire, and taking steps to prevent these scenarios will minimise risk.

He said solid fuel stoves and fireplaces provide good heat for the home, but it is the chimney that removes harmful gases produced when anything is burned.

As they travel up the stack and cool, condensation occurs to create a sticky residue which is black or brown in appearance. It remains highly combustible and in sufficient quantities can catch alight again.

He said certain conditions

encourage the problem, such as restricted air supply, using unseasoned wood and a cold chimney temperature, especially those on outside walls.

Cleaning regularly and using the correct good quality fuel dramatically reduces these residues.

But how do you know if the worst is starting to happen? Mr Sanders said it is not easy without a full inspection, but a professional chimney sweep will examine for a puffy residue like creosote, with rainbow coloured streaks, that has expanded beyond its normal form.

Also checked is any warping of metal of the damper, metal smoke

chamber, connector pipe or factory-built metal chimney.

Then there are cracked or collapsed flue tiles, or tiles with large chunks missing; discoloured and distorted rain cap or flue; creosote flakes on the roof or ground; damaged roofing material; cracks in masonry; and even evidence of smoke escaping through mortar joints of masonry or tile liners.

In addition, Kent Fire and Rescue advise having a chimney swept quarterly for wood fires and twice a year for coal. It recommends only properly seasoned wood be burnt and not to overload your grate or appliance.

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BUSY: At work and rest, the Tigers battled through various scenarios before officers served the troops with a slap-up Christmas meal

Festive food at Army exercise

By KoS reporter
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

SOLDIERS based in Canterbury were put through their paces in urban warfare last weekend.

Troops of the 3rd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (3PWRR), known as The Tigers, were at the Stanford Training Area (Stanta) in Thetford, Norfolk.

And in between working through a series of scenarios, climbing over walls and storming buildings, firing hundreds of blank rounds and using special smoke grenades, they found time to come together for a communal Christmas meal.

Commanding officer of the battalion Lt Col Andy Betts said: "This exercise rounds off what has been a really successful year for the battalion following the return of a platoon from Afghanistan and a testing battalion exercise in Spain."

"This exercise is the culmination of a number of good results and hard work. It is therefore also fitting to celebrate this with a traditional soldiers' Christmas lunch in



the field served by the officers and seniors ranks as we prepare for the festive season."

The battalion is made up primarily of reservists with an element of regular soldiers, who supervise the training and manage the daily requirements needed to run and

manage the battalion.

Private Tom Hallet, 22, who is currently studying politics at the University of Kent at Canterbury, said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed the training. I have been able to take part in a series of exercises and as a fairly new member of the battalion I particularly liked undertaking the key role of the company signaller."

On completion of the training the soldiers enjoyed a traditional roast Christmas lunch, served by the officers and senior ranks in one of the buildings where the exercise took place.

The soldiers will deploy to Estonia in September 2016 for a two-week Nato exercise, which will enable them to build upon the training exercise here and of the overseas training of the last two years in Cyprus and Spain.



kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk

North & West



WARFARE:
The training took place in Thetford in Norfolk. The battalion took part in exercises in Spain earlier this year.

Major changes to trains this Christmas 24 December - 3 January

From early evening on 24 December there will be no Southeastern trains at London Bridge, Cannon Street, Charing Cross or Waterloo East and some stations will not have any direct services to London.

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Women Seeking

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SALLY, 34yrs seeks doesn't want to be lonely this xmas. Seeks first any age/born/sex/religion must have GSOH. Box: 4100557. Text only.

SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3008 Box: 409715

SLIM female GSOH, 59, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. Text only to Mailbox no: 4752600

FELICITY, 30yrs, attractive, petite but shapely lady seeks gent for indoor activities! Age/looks/marital status unimportant but must be discreet and non demanding. Tel: 0906 515 3020 Box 420235

LUCY, 32, blonde, tall and slim, looking for a casual fun, nothing serious. Discretion needed and assured. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420237

KATIE, 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3000 Box 410673

DANCE partner 55-75 sought by Maureen, Thane based lady, slim, brown hair, green eyes, seeking dancing, fun and friendship Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420231

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 3004 Box 418167

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busy, brunettes seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 40s, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun. Friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 4815793

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417430

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417803

PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc. Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

CHANTELE, 58, light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like lights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883

MELANIE, tanned, toned, young 41yrs divorcée with own flat, working, solvent, just missing a chap. Text only to Mailbox No: 412160

MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419857

CHLOE, pretty brunette, 30yrs good job but looking male with a naughty side, is that you, age unimportant. Text only to Mailbox No: 4057558

PAT, slim, single, 68, non-smoker, GSOH, likes going for walks etc, seeks male, slim, single, 66-70, non-smoker, clean shaven, GSOH, with similar interests. Canterbury area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

RACHEL attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418349

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418517

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, rights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418349

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50s, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLM professional, caring gent, 50-60s for attention and future together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418569

MALE 58, 5ft 8ins, light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like lights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883

MELANIE, tanned, toned, young 41yrs divorcée with own flat, working, solvent, just missing a chap. Text only to Mailbox No: 412160

MARIE, very lovely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

ESSEX lady, mid 60s, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

KATIE, 6ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. Text only to Mailbox No: 4710874

FEMALE seeking male for adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413809

BUSIE 32, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably, older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

MAY very black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418211

SUE young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418171

BLONDE female, 47, looking for fun, sensual, experienced, understanding, seeking similar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418575

ALISON 30, pretty, slim with long brown hair, fit and active seeks fit older male for energetic relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418497

DEBORAH 41, intelligent, brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515

ATTRACTIVE black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215

NICE looking genuine man would like to meet nice lady any age for company, outings with GSOH. Text only to Mailbox no: 4923399

ANDREW, 63, likes animals, walking, foot fares, shopping, looking for someone similar living in the Maidstone/Kent area, for possible LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418203

RICHARD 59 from East Kent, WLM genuine female 50 plus for friendship. Text only to Mailbox No: 4448765

MALE 56 yrs, GSOH, n/s, would like to meet a lady to have happy times, lots of love to give, to enjoy good times in and out. Text only to Mailbox No: 4181244

VINCENT 46, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 373737

WHITE Knight 59 5'10 tall, CHAC, in shining armour, looking for Damsel in Distress of similar age to share fun & laughter. Text only to Mailbox no: 5073004

CALM, kind and good company, male seeking a lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418732

50YR old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418841

MALE 47, builder, seeks lady for companionship and closeness, age and looks unimportant. Text only to Mailbox no: 4924811

MATTHEW, five foot eleven, looking for a mature lady for discreet friendship and a few laughs. Dartford area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419409

JOHN, 47, six foot two, well-built, handsome, non-smoker, intelligent and funny, doesn't take himself too seriously, easy to get along with, seeks attractive female, any age, for discreet, adventurous, any time fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419461

CLINT, 37, kind, caring, honest and WLM someone of any age who is similar and looking for a relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419951

ROCKABALLY guy, seeks rock chick, 25-50 who likes 50's rock music and bands. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 284750

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SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418859

MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535

MIKE Canterbury mature male, seeks single maturity 25-42, slim-medium build for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275

MALE, 38, tall, hardworking, 6ft 2, looking for long-term lover/older woman. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418877

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535

BARRY 49, 6ft, well built, kind, affectionate, loving, seeks special lady for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 393855

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

JESSICA, 53 yrs old, feminine, sexy, smooth body seeking guy or girl for fun, must be non-smoker. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418713

FEMININE, sexy, cross-dresser, non-smoker, seeking cross-dresser or gay or bi guy for fun. Must be non-smoker. Text only to Mailbox No: 4896072

SENIOR 60 male, 70s, n/s, clean-shaven, living in the Maidstone area, seeking similar to male, aged 50-60, in the Maidstone area, for myself to give service to. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420219

BI male 57 slim GSOH seeks local guy for fun and friendship. Text only to Mailbox No: 4751943

JOHN, 47, six foot two, well-built, handsome, non-smoker, intelligent and funny, doesn't take himself too seriously, easy to get along with, seeks attractive female, any age, for discreet, adventurous, any time fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419461

CLINT, 37, kind, caring, honest and WLM someone of any age who is similar and looking for a relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419951

ROCKABALLY guy, seeks rock chick, 25-50 who likes 50's rock music and bands. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 284750

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SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418859

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MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535

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COMEDY: Jamie Rickers will be playing Buttons

Famous faces take to stage as a panto gets under way

Panto season is now underway in Tunbridge Wells, writes **Molly Kersey-Law**

FAMILY pantomime Cinderella is being performed in Tunbridge Wells.

The production started its run at the Assembly Hall Theatre on Friday (December 11) and it will be on stage until January 3, 2016.

The show features a host of famous faces – with Dani Harmer taking on the role of Cinderella.

She is known to millions of people for her starring role in the CBBC series The Story of Tracy Beaker and Tracy Beaker Returns.

She also reached the final in BBC1 series Strictly Come Dancing with professional dance partner Vincent Simone.

Speaking about her role as Tracy Beaker, she said: "It feels strange to have grown up in the spotlight. All my horrible teenage years were in

front of the camera. Braces, spots, frizzy hair all well documented!

"I do miss Tracy Beaker as she was so much fun to play. But we did bring her back as an adult so I feel we've covered all we can with the character."

And she is looking forward to taking to the stage and performing in this year's pantomime.

"I've been doing panto for 20 years now so I've never had much time to actually sit down and watch a panto," she said.

"I've been in them since I was six so for me panto is Christmas."

Ms Harmer will be joined on stage by EastEnders and Doctor Who actor Louise Jameson, who will be playing the Fairy Godmother, and children's TV presenter Jamie Rickers, who will take on the role of Buttons.

Mr Rickers said: "Buttons isn't a

story teller or an original character in the original story.

"He's the lovable comedy figure that will help anyone.

"He's Cinderella's and the audience's best friend.

"The key to Buttons is just to have fun with the audience.

"He must be able to laugh at himself and because he is picked on by the ugly sisters, be able to hope the audience feel sorry for him.

"He needs to be everyone's brother or sister and make everyone feel relaxed when they see him.

"When I'm in the audience I always want to see more of Buttons and can't wait for him to be back on. If I get it wrong, then the empathy, expectation and hope fails. Let's hope I don't get it wrong."

Ms Jameson is a fan of panto and has been to many performances over the years.

"Every year we went to a panto," she said.

"I remember Puss from Puss in Boots coming through the auditorium and rushing up to hug him/her and the whole audience going 'aaaaaah' and being shocked that anyone was watching, and a little embarrassed.

"I was so convinced it was just me and the cat.

"That's what we panto-ers do for the next generation, weave a web of magic, especially Good Fairy, and watching the grandparents watch through their grandchildren's eyes and getting their enjoyment as strongly as they did as children. Family entertainment at its best."

Cinderella is produced by UK Productions. For more details or to book tickets call the box office on 01892 530613 or visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

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PANTO AT THE PAVILION - *Aladdin*

Sunday, 13th December 2015

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£35 per person half price for children under 12

Two course supper in The Pavilion Restaurant followed by the performance. Supper from 4.30 pm. Performance 6.30 pm

CHRISTMAS BALLS

Friday 11th December & Friday 18th December 2015*

BOXING DAY BALL

Saturday 26th December 2015

The evenings commence with a champagne and canapé reception in the Great Hall followed by a special four course dinner including coffee and petits fours. After dinner enjoy dancing to our resident live band.*

£95 per person *Black Tie Events*

VEGAS NIGHT

Sunday, 27th December 2015

An entertaining, American-themed evening of glitz and glamour. Black Tie or Tuxedo optional and a chance for the ladies to sparkle. Start the evening with a 'Vegas' cocktail at 7.00 pm followed by our 'American' menu finishing with coffee and popcorn. Enjoy the sound of our smooth 'Sinatra' style singer with dancing in the Great Hall and try your luck at the 'fun' casino and blackjack tables.*

£80 per person

MOTOWN NIGHT

Monday, 28th December 2015

The evening commences at 7.00 pm with a 'Motown' Cocktail. A superb dinner awaits you in the Manor Restaurant followed by live singers "Motown Magic" - dance the night away to favourite Motown tunes.*

£80 per person

1980'S DISCOTHEQUE

Tuesday, 29th December 2015

Join us in the Great Hall at 7.00 pm where we will be serving Piña Coladas before going through to the Manor Restaurant and savouring a typical 1980's menu. After dinner our resident DJ will play 1980's music and keep you dancing all night long.*

£80 per person

*until midnight

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'Brutally moving' adaptation of best-selling memoir in Margate

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

AN adaptation of Josh Kilmer-Purcell's best-selling autobiography *I Am Not Myself These Days* will be performed in Margate as part of its UK tour.

The 'brutally moving' show tells the story of an alcoholic drag queen called Aqua, who is desperately trying to maintain a relationship with Jack - a rent boy who is addicted to crack cocaine.

The one-man performance is set in 1990s New York and it has been adapted from Mr Kilmer-Purcell's memoir.

The book tells the autobiographical story of a young New Yorker's journey to self-acceptance while living a double life - working as an advertising art director by day and as a drag queen by night.

The show is directed by Nick Bagnall and produced by Fuel - which was founded in 2004 and aims to bring new and adventurous work to audiences.

The adaptation has been written and performed by Tom Stuart.

He has previously appeared in



HONEST: Tom Stuart has written and performed in the adaptation

films including *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* and *The Look of Love*, as well as starring in TV shows such as *Law and Order* and *Walking and Talking*.

Speaking about the play, he explained: "It's such an incredibly honest, open and engaging book."

"I wanted to see if I could extend that honesty to the stage and make an audience feel how I felt reading the book alone in my bed."

"I like to think of it as a love story, albeit an unconventional one."

"Although set in a specific time and place, I think most people will be able to relate to and recognise something of themselves in it, whatever their background or circumstances."

I Am Not Myself These Days was performed at this year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival, where it received good reviews.

The performance will be taking place at the Theatre Royal Margate on February 12, 2016.

The performance will be starting at 7.30pm.

Tickets to the show are £12 or £10 with concessions.

For more information or to book tickets, you can visit www.theatroyalmargate.com.

Alternatively call the box office on 01843 292795.

The Kooks' gig rescheduled

THE Kooks' gig at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, has been rescheduled to January 26, 2016, and tickets to the December 14 show will remain valid. For details, visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone.



The magic of Christmas

MUSICAL show *The Magic of Christmas*, featuring the Belvedere Concert Band, will be performed at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford.

The performance will take place on December 18 at 7.30pm.

Visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk or call the ticket office on 01322 220000 to book.

Circus of horrors in town

THE Circus of Horrors will perform at Margate Winter Gardens as part of their 21st anniversary tour - Welcome to the Carnevil - on February 27 2016 at 7.30pm.

Call 01843 292795 to book.



Musical Christmas party

BANDS All We Are and Black Peaches will be performing at the Tom Thumb Theatre, Margate, as part of the Moshi Moshi Christmas Party event.

The show takes place on December 17 at 7.30pm and tickets are £8.

For details, visit www.tomthumbtheatre.co.uk.

Furley Park Primary Academy

Ofsted rated 'Good with Outstanding Features'

Parents Tours 15th, 16th, 17th December 2015

6th and 7th January 2016



Academy 'walk round' tours for parents of pupils due to start school in September 2016

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Please call 01233 501732 and ask for 'The Magpie Room' to book your place and find out what Furley Park Primary Academy can offer you and your child.

We look forward to your visit!

Furley Park Primary Academy, Reed Crescent, Park Farm, Ashford, TN23 3PA

Frankie Valli songs in show

NEW Jersey Nights will be performed at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, from January 5 to 10, 2016.

To book, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk or call the ticket office on 01322 220000.



Family show in Folkestone

FAMILY show Play Dough will be performed at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on February 20, 2016, at 2.30pm.

The interactive show features hosts Queenie and TooMuch, who will tell the story of how money really works.

Visit www.quarterhouse.co.uk to book.

Celtic music in Margate

SCOTTISH band Tannahill Weavers will be performing at the Theatre Royal Margate on February 26, 2015, at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £14 or £12 with concessions.

Call 01843 292795 to book.



Paul Carrack to perform

SINGER Paul Carrack will be performing at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on February 6, 2016.

The show will be starting at 7.30pm.

Tickets range from £29.50 to £39.50.

For more information or to book, visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

Vulnerable protagonist in A Better Woman

REVIEW: Molly Kersey-Law
molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

ANYONE who has ever been on a disastrous date or two will be able to empathise with the protagonist in *A Better Woman*.

The show tells the story of hapless Tom, played brilliantly by Ben Porter, who is in his forties and looking for someone to spend the rest of his life with.

He tries online dating and meets a number of women, including straight-talking Jessica.

They have an instant connection, but Tom is racked with indecision after finding out about her 'baggage'.

He relays all of this to his long-suffering friends and neighbours – Maurice and Sherry.

The pair, played by Paul Panting and Charlie Norfolk, have been married for years and are going through problems of their own.

Maurice feels a bit envious of Tom's freedom to date numerous different women, but Tom desperately wants the comfort and stability of their relationship.



After meeting Jessica he carries on going on dates, with varying degrees of success. He's an odd character, bordering a little on Mark Corrigan from Channel 4's *Peep Show*.

There is something very endearing about him and his nervous approach to the dating world.

The audience is given an insight into his thoughts – with him frequently breaking off from the action in the play to explain what's going on in his mind.

We find out more about his past

relationship with Julia.

She is a constant presence throughout the play, with his neighbours making the startling realisation that all of the women he is going on dates with look exactly like his ex-girlfriend.

When Julia appears, he needs to choose between two women.

Julia and the women who look like her are played by Poppy Miller.

Ms Miller plays them all well, adopting different hairstyles, voices and personas and switching seamlessly between them.



CHOICE: The show was performed at the Marlowe Studio



DATE: Ben Porter and Poppy Miller. Pictures: Mark Douet

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The Christmas decorations that take the biscuit

There are a number of ways to transform biscuits into delicious tree decorations this festive season...

NOTHING beats the smell of Christmas - the hint of pine and the mulled wine bubbling away on the stove... Add the aroma of freshly baked biscuits and you might just have the recipe for the sweetest-smelling Yuletide ever.

Why not turn those biscuits into tree decorations for a look that's cute, classy and utterly delicious.

Recipes can be found in the Biscuiters Book of Iced Biscuits by Harriet Hastings and Sarah Moore.

Cut a hole at the top of each biscuit with the end of a straw before baking. Once they have been made you can select your icing to decorate them.

Start off by making a basic royal icing, then tweak it to create line icing

(this is used for outlines, creating pattern and detail, while stopping the other icing spilling over the edges) and flooding icing (the larger area of icing on top of the biscuit).

Royal icing makes enough for 24 biscuits. You'll need four pasteurised egg whites and 900g of icing sugar.

Add dry ingredients to the egg whites and whisk or beat for five minutes if using an electric beater or whisk. Continue until ingredients form a thick paste that is white in colour and has the consistency of toothpaste. If you're not using immediately, cover the icing and refrigerate.

Divide up the royal icing and spoon the required amounts into small bowls to create the line icing. Put the royal icing into a large bowl to add a



SWEET: Biscuits could make good decorations this year

few drops of water at a time to create the flooding icing - stirring constantly until the mixture is roughly the same consistency as custard.

Once your icing and biscuits are ready to go, it's time to get creative.

You'll want to pop your line icing into piping bags (two-thirds full, end snipped off) and your flooding icing into squeeze bottles.

Study the biscuit and icing you want to copy, then take the line icing and pipe on your outline. It's a good idea to have a few goes on parchment paper first, until you've got the pressure right. Make sure your piping bag is twisted and held tight and keep the pressure on throughout.

Once you've completed your lines, your first biscuit should be dry

enough for the flooding icing. This is the easy - and surprisingly calming - part. Choose your colour then squeeze the bottle to release the icing into the area you need it, and swirl it around, using the nozzle to fill the space. If there are any tricky corners, use the tip of a cocktail stick to eke it out to the edge.

Once flooded, pop them in a low oven to dry for 30-45 minutes - 50C or gas mark 0.5 is fine for this.

Use the line icing to go over any detailing, and there you have it - professional-looking biscuits, requiring a thin bit of ribbon to be slotted through the hole, tied together and hung on the Christmas tree, or given as a gift.

Biscuiters Book Of Iced Biscuits is £12.99, published by Kyle Books.

Picture of Dorian Grey

THE Picture of Dorian Grey will be performed at the Exchange Studio in the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone.

Based on literary legend Oscar Wilde's only novel, the play will be performed on January 15.

The performance starts at 7.30pm and tickets are £15.

For more information, or to book tickets, visit www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk.

Carr due in Folkestone

THE host of Channel 4's comedy panel show 8 Out of 10 Cats will be performing in Folkestone in 2017.

The comedian will be taking to the stage at the Leas Cliff Hall on February 8.

The performance will be starting at 8pm. Tickets to the show are £31.65 or £28.75 for theatre card members.

For further details, or to book, visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone.

Heart-wrenching show

MUSICAL Blood Brothers will be performed in Bromley next year.

The show, written by Willy Russell, tells the story of twin brothers who are separated at birth and meet each other again later in life with fateful consequences.

It will be on stage at the Churchill Theatre from February 22 to 27, with performances at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley to book.

Chas and Dave on tour

CHAS and Dave will be bringing their On The Road tour to Chatham.

The pair started performing songs together in 1972 and they are celebrating their 50th anniversary.

They will be bringing their show to the Central Theatre on April 30 2016 at 7.30pm.

Tickets range from £27.50 to £29.50.

For more details, visit www.tickets.medway.gov.uk.

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Love your pet

A celebration of our special friends...

Welcome!

Hello and welcome to Love Your Pet. They are some of our dearest friends and in this special supplement we wanted to celebrate the special bond that exists between us and our pets.

We start off with a look back at some of the presents that you can buy for your furry friend this Christmas, highlighting some purrfect gifts which you might want to put under the tree for your pet.

We look at ways you can take part in the Santa Paws appeal and help animals who don't have a home this Christmas over on page 60, and on page 61 we share some of the ways that you can keep your pet safe over the festive period - with advice on decorations, Christmas trees and food.

We've also sprinkled in a Polly's pet tips courtesy of Companion Care's Vet Report.

This supplement will be running each month and we want to hear your stories about your pets, the things that make them special, or any quirky tales you might have, and see your photos of them (see more below). Get in contact with us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.



FESTIVE: Our first pets supplement includes tips on how to keep your furry friends safe over Christmas

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Send us your photographs

We'd love to include photos of your pet in our new monthly supplement

LOOK at the smart phone or camera of anyone with a pet and chances are you will find a number of photographs of their furry friend.

In the age of the 'selfie' many people are keen to take and share photographs of their pets doing something funny or cute.

With pets moving around and sometimes being reluctant to stay in one place for very long, getting a good picture of them can feel like something of an achievement.

We spend a lot of time with our pets, and they often become a part of the family, slotting into our daily routines and becoming a big part of our lives.

There is a lot to be said for getting a photograph of them which portrays their quirks and their own unique characters.

In our new monthly pets supplement we want to include the photographs taken of pets all around the country.

Maybe you have a fun-loving dog, or a cat with funny characteristics?



Or perhaps you have a pet rabbit that you're proud of, or a budgie or lizard?

We'd love to hear a little bit about them, their likes and dislikes and how long they have lived with you.

If you would like your pet to be featured on the page, then please email a high resolution photograph, along with their name, the town they live in and a brief description of them, to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

If you have a funny story about something your pet has done that you would like to share with us, why not write to us at Kent on Sunday, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP.



Treat your pets at this festive season

Dogs and cats are the most popular pets in the south east – and we don't want them to feel left out at Christmas-time, do we? Feast your eyes on these fun ideas to suit every budget...

It's a cliché, but it's true – we are a nation of pet-lovers, with almost half (48 per cent) of all households owning at least one of the 24 million pets in the country, according to a PetPlan census.

In London and the south-east the east, cats are favourite, comprising 34 per cent of our pets, closely followed by dogs (32 per cent),

with fish, and indoor birds a little way behind. And just to prove our love, it's estimated that 47 per cent of UK pet owners spend between £501 and £1,000 a year on their pride and joys, with Londoners more generous than the rest of the country.

Well, it is Christmas after all, so we've put together a few treats so your pet doesn't miss out on the big day.



Traditional jumper for dogs, £10, Accessorize, www.accessorize.com



Dog bone wreath, £22.95, House of Bath, www.houseofbath.co.uk



Lord Lou George stonewashed canvas grey sofa bed, £283, www.lordlou.com



Fatboy The Doggie-lounge bed, £61.95, www.fatboy.com



Umbra Fish Hotel £40 by Red Candy, available from www.redcandy.co.uk



Black Bridle Collar, fitted with British brass. Whistle included. Prices start from £60. Available from In Spaces www.in-spaces.com



Fancy Feed Layers Pellets sack and mixed corn for chickens. Available in 5kg or 20kg sacks for around £12 from www.amazon.co.uk Visit www.facebook.com/Fancy-Feed-Company



Plush Christmas Tree Hideaway for Hamsters, £5. Available from www.petsathome.com



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Fundraising to help animals

Not all animals are lucky enough to have a loving home at Christmas. Animal charity Support Action For Pets has teamed up with Pets At Home and rescue centres around the UK to raise funds to help pets get a nice Christmas dinner and some presents over the festive season...

WHILE many pets will be cuddled up in the warm with their owners this festive season, not all animals will be so lucky.

Some will be living in rescue centres, hoping to find a loving new home.

Animal charity Support Adoption For Pets is hoping to help thousands of animals in care across the UK this Christmas, providing them with a special treat over the festive period.

The charity has partnered up with Pets At Home and some 350 animal rescue centres for its Santa Paws

appeal – which is aiming to raise awareness of rescue pets in need of a forever home this festive season.

The appeal will be running until Christmas Eve, and up until then animal lovers will be able to donate 50p towards a pet's Christmas dinner, either at their local Pets At Home store or online.

Shoppers will also be given the option of buying an extra toy or treat when they purchase something for their own furry friend, which will be donated to local animal rescue centres.

Amy Wilson, charity manager at Support Adoption For Pets explains:

“As we approach Christmas we want to help raise awareness of the animals who won't be enjoying a warm fire or the security of a loving forever family and provide them with a Christmas treat.

“For as little as 50p you can provide a needy pet with a Christmas dinner.

“This year we're very excited to be able to let animal lovers donate a pet Christmas dinner via our website and we hope that everyone will get behind the cause and buy a festive feast for a pet in rescue.”

To find out more or to donate, visit www.supportadoptionforpets.co.uk



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BRANDS HATCH

battersea.org.uk

Open daily, visitors welcome

Synsford and Longfield

Polly's tips

Currently diabetes affects about 1 in 200 cats and 1 in 300 dogs

Making your pet safe

Here are some tips on making sure your furry friends are happy and healthy at Christmas...



MANY pet owners will be sharing the Christmas period with their furry friends.

It's great to have the animals that you love around at Christmas, joining in the celebrations with you.

However, there are a number of steps that should be taken to make sure that your pet is happy and content over the Christmas period.

✳ **Make sure you choose decorations carefully:** Part of the fun of Christmas is being able to decorate your home.

But when you have a pet to consider, it's important to make sure that you choose decorations that won't cause them any harm.

Prickly Christmas trees are very dangerous for animals - with a risk that they will ingest real or fake pine needles, causing internal damage.

An artificial tree could be safer, but you will need to secure it so your pets cannot knock it over and try and prevent them from climbing on it.

If parts fall off the tree, make sure to Hoover them up straight away so your pet doesn't swallow them.

If possible, close the door of the room containing the Christmas tree and keep it shut unless you are there to supervise your pet.

Plants including poinsettias, holly, mistletoe, amaryllis, pine sap and ferns are poisonous to cats and dogs.

When you choose your Christmas decorations, make sure you select ones which are marked 'non-toxic'. Also, you should either keep any Christmas lights out of reach or use a cable guard to prevent pets from chewing through the wires.

It is a bad idea to put any edible decorations on the tree or to keep them wrapped up underneath, in case your pet smells this and tries to eat them.

✳ **Don't feed your pets food that could harm them:** We all like to overindulge during the festive season, but rich foods will not do your pets any favours

and will make them very ill.

There are certain festive foods which are poisonous to dogs, including: chocolate, sultanas, raisins and grapes.

It would be much better for your pets to stick to their usual eating patterns - feed them the food you usually give them at the times of day that it is normally provided.

Watch any edible gifts around your pets to make sure that they don't eat any of them.

Never give animals bones from chickens or turkeys. These bones could very easily splinter, with the potential to cause your pet some nasty injuries - such as tearing their intestines or getting caught in their throats.

✳ **Keep their needs in mind:** When it's cold outside and you are in the warm with mulled wine, a mince pie and a Christmas special on the TV, maybe the last thing you feel like doing is dragging yourself out of the house.

However, long walks will keep pet dogs happy and healthy. It is really important not to neglect this and keep them cooped up indoors as you enjoy the festive season.

Make sure to keep up their usual walking routine, which will stop them from being disruptive or getting too bored.

This applies to other pets too, keep to usual feeding schedules so they don't become confused.

✳ **Give them some space if they need it:** If you have additional guests coming to yours for Christmas, this will change the status quo of the household and could create some disruption for more nervous pets.

Some animals will adjust to this very well, but others could struggle. Make sure you set aside a room for them, where they can relax and have some time out if they are feeling skittish around new people.

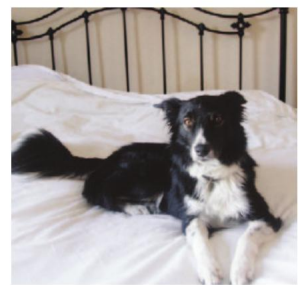
For example, maybe there is a bedroom or spare room you won't be using during the day?

Make sure that there is some food, water and a bed in there for your pet so they can fully relax, and check on them to make sure they are doing well.

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Puerto Rico offering rich pickings

TRAVEL REVIEW: Puerto Rico

by James Edgar

It has just turned midnight on a balmy Friday night in San Juan, and I am getting into my groove. Drumming troupes are playing along to the salsa beats blaring out of the bar, and I'm swaying my rum-rhythmed hips, blending into the dancing crowd. Or so I think.

I am in La Placita de Santurce, where hundreds of people have spilled out of the open-fronted bars to dance and drink.

By day, this is San Juan's food market, but by night, it transforms into a vibrant fiesta of colour, salsa and food. I have just three days in Puerto Rico, which admittedly seems like an extravagant trip.

But now low cost airline Norwegian is flying direct from Gatwick to San Juan, a long weekend break to the Caribbean is not quite as absurd as it initially sounds.

With return flights as cheap as £250 return, the twice weekly route opens the opportunity for a truly exotic short holiday.

I force myself away from La Placita with the party in full flow - not because I want to leave, but because there are so many places to experience during my flying visit.

Next on my agenda is a bar that was voted one of the 50 best in the world in a 2015 poll - La Factoria.

No sign hangs above the door to this artistic hangout in the heart of Old San Juan, because this cocktail bar doesn't need one.

Unpretentious and bohemian, La Factoria is the perfect place to dance the night away to the ubiquitous sound of salsa. The challenge is trying not to get lost in this maze of tunnels and tiny rooms, while sipping fresh cocktails made with local rum.

Rum is everywhere in Puerto Rico,



HISTORY: Breathtaking views are offered from the fort's ramparts

and the country is proud of its history with the spirit. The island is said to be the largest producer in the world, and despite a squabble over which barman came up with the recipe, the world famous pina colada cocktail was invented in San Juan.

My odyssey to the sugar cane-based spirit begins at Bacardi's 'Cathedral of Rum' in Catano.

The distillery, built in 1958, is the largest premium rum facility in the

world, where almost 85 per cent of Bacardi's production comes from - it churns out 21 million cases per year for shipment around the world.

My tour scratches the surface of the history of Bacardi, from its beginnings in neighbouring Cuba to worldwide domination of the rum market, but it gives me a platform on which to blag my way around the local bars, and a complimentary Cuba libre.

I am staying at the Hilton Caribe, a

historic hotel on the eastern side of the Isleta de San Juan.

The first Hilton outside the US, it's where bartender Ramon 'Monchito' Marrero Perez claims to have served the pina colada first, at the hotel's Beachcomber Bar in August 1954.

The true origin of the rum, coconut milk and pineapple juice cocktail will probably never be discovered, but there are certainly few better places to sip one at sunset.

TRAVEL FACTS

James Edgar was a guest of Norwegian who now operate two flights per week (Wednesday and Saturdays) from London to San Juan throughout winter 2015/16.

The flights will be operated by a fleet of brand new Dreamliner aircraft.

Fares start from £159 one-way or £250.10 return.

Visit www.norwegian.co.uk for more details.

Puerto Rico's geographical position meant the island was a key strategic territory when European explorers arrived in the region.

For many ships using the transatlantic trade winds, Puerto Rico was the first land to be sighted after weeks at sea, so it was seen as an important gateway to the riches of the Caribbean. The Spanish took control in the early 16th century and built fortifications to protect its most valuable outpost from attackers, such as the British and Dutch. They ruled for 400 years until Puerto Rico was declared a territory of the United States.

Three forts - San Felipe del Morro, San Cristobal and San Juan de la Cruz - make up La Fortaleza, which, along with a large section of the old city wall, is a Unesco World Heritage site.

San Cristobal, the largest Spanish fort in the so-called New World, stands guard on the eastern side of the walled city of Old San Juan.

With its thick walls, dungeons, strategic tunnels and sentry boxes, it's easy to imagine what life was like for the soldiers - and prisoners - here.

Breathtaking views along the coastline and out across the Atlantic are a welcome reward for the hike to the top of the ramparts.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



GRANDMA (15, 79 mins) Comedy/Romance

LESBIAN poet Elle, played by Lily Tomlin, is slowly coming to terms with the death of her long-term partner Vi. She lashes out and coldly terminates a fledgling romance with girlfriend Olivia. Soon after, Elle's 18-year-old

granddaughter Sage arrives in search of money. The teenager has booked an appointment at an abortion clinic, but doesn't have the funds for the procedure.

Nor does Elle, but that doesn't stop the grandmother from jumping into her car with Sage and tearing around Los Angeles to call in unpaid debts and beg for cash.

They initially visit Sage's slacker boyfriend Cam, whose laissez faire attitude to birth control rankles Elle.

Further pit-stops include transgender tattoo artist Deathy, Elle's ex-husband Karl and Sage's workaholic mother Judy. As the deadline for the abortion approaches, Sage's emotional dam breaks.

BY THE SEA (15, 122 mins) Drama/Romance

Achingly cool style casts a disdainful glance at substance in Angelina Jolie Pitt's languorous examination

of marital discord set in a 1970s resort in the south of France.

Every frame is speckled with woe. With a running time of just over two hours, that's a lot of misery and self-loathing.

By The Sea opens with New York author Roland (Brad Pitt) and his wife Vanessa (Angelina Jolie Pitt) arriving at a hotel, where he hopes the sea air will unclog his writer's block. Tension between the couple is palpable.

The air of melancholy momentarily lifts when newlyweds Francois and Lea check in to an adjacent suite and Vanessa discovers a hole in the wall that allows her to spy on the new arrivals, who hop into bed with frenzied regularity.

At first, this voyeurism seems to stoke the smouldering embers of Vanessa and Roland's dormant desire. However, her fixation on the couple next door errs dangerously close to all-consuming obsession.



KRAMPUS (15, 98 mins) Horror/Comedy

MAX Engel is a sensitive 12-year-old who cherishes the festive season. When he disrupts a school play to punch a classmate who suggests Santa Claus is little more than a marketing ploy, his workaholic father David and long-suffering mother Sarah are furious.

Sarah's sister Linda, her husband and children join the festivities, with alcohol-swigging Aunt Dorothy.

When heated conversation culminates in a brawl, a tearful Max tears up his letter to the North Pole.

Cloven-hooved beast Krampus descends on the besieged family home to teach feuding generations a harsh lesson in self-sacrifice.

AS you sit by the fire enjoying your glass of mulled wine and mince pie, now's a good time to start planning your garden for next year - and there are plenty of ideas out there in books.

So, put some late additions on your Christmas wish list to satisfy your own gardening needs and to help create a new chapter in your garden.

One of this autumn's most talked-about botanical books is *The Cabaret Of Plants: Botany And The Imagination* by Richard Mabey - published by Profile and priced at £20 - which draws on plants in history, art and literature.

Mr Mabey, author of *Flora Britannica*, explores plants that have awoken our sense of wonder and changed our ideas about science and beauty.

Picked from every walk of life, the self-contained chapters feature everything from weeds to water lilies, featuring high-quality prints and drawings.

Find out the intricacies of how flowers communicate with their pollinators in award-winning wildlife photographer Heather Angel's dazzling tome, *Pollination Power*, published by Kew and priced at £25.

Through her stunning photography, see how plants use colour, shape and guiding lines to attract insects and birds, which gather nectar in most unusual ways.

The Private Gardens Of England, edited by Tania Compton, published by Constable and priced at £75, is a



CHRISTMAS: There are a number of books to satisfy gardening needs

Festive books for gardeners

glorious celebration of the art of gardening through some of the country's hidden horticultural jewels.

Some 35 English private gardens, thoughtfully selected by the writer and designer Tania Compton, are vividly described in the words of their owners, who bring an astonishing sense of intimacy to their own creations, as well as their collaborations

with some of the leading garden.

If you're thinking of getting an allotment in the New Year, or you're wondering what to grow on your existing plot, *The RHS Allotment Handbook & Planner*, published by Octopus and priced at £12.99, is an invaluable guide to help you choose.

Experts from the Royal Horticultural Society take all abilities through

the different stages, and the book includes a planner setting out seasons, what should be sown and grown - and when.

Anyone looking for inspirational design will welcome *The Art Of Gardening* by R William Thomas, published by Timber and priced at £25.

It focuses on Chanticleer, a 37-acre public garden in Pennsylvania, re-

nowned for encouraging experimentation in design and many areas including a fantasy garden, formal borders and woodland shades. Readers will learn how to make the most of a landscape's natural features, integrating structures and creating themes to tie areas together, as well as tips on the right plants for specific purposes.



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Doing nothing is not an option

CONCERNING the issue of taking military action against Daesh I am constantly astounded by the naivety displayed by those who wish to do nothing.

Of course, if one chooses to hide under the bedclothes and take no action against aggressors one may be able to survive for a while but, as Churchill pointed out, in the end they will come for you. Surely everyone knows that appeasement merely leads to the destruction of those who practice it and to the success of those without scruple.

Pacifists clearly do not understand the Islamists hate us not for what we do, but for what we are, and not to resist their onward march would result in the eradication of Christianity, Judaism and democracy throughout the world.

There is a consensus among the chattering classes that only diplomacy, not force, can solve international problems and also that an idea cannot be beaten by the use of the military.

We should send an army, together with those of our friends in France, America and Russia, to prosecute a total war against those who seek to destroy our way of life. If we could overcome the terrible power of Nazi Germany then those primitives who behead unarmed civilians would, in comparison, be wheat before the sickle.

Mr Putin may be authoritarian but, unlike our common jihadist enemy, he is rational. He is someone with whom we could work, unlike the primitives who seek to destroy us all.

Colin Bullen,
Tonbridge

Who's paying for the refugees?

I WAS shocked and disgusted to read the article about the housing of Syrian refugees by Ashford council (KoS, last week).

The council seems very forthright in supporting these foreigners but has forgotten about their own people who pay for their existence.

The shortage in housing means young people in Ashford cannot get housing and what housing there is, is either too expensive to buy or to rent. So how can Ashford council house 250 Syrians and not house their own people?

The private landlords will certainly gain from Ashford council footing the Syrians' rent but will they pay the landlords' full rent or only pay what the council

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Borders underscore Middle East issues

I WOULD be suprised if many people did not have doubts about bombing IS in Syria.

The difficulty is what to do next and I would suggest there needs to be a fundamental rethink into what the future of the region should be.

I believe there needs to be a fundamental redrawing of the borders between countries, and perhaps the creation of one or two new countries.

Years ago I spent some five years travelling on business throughout the Middle East and problems were apparent then. The emergence of IS has really brought to a head the problems, many of which have been present ever since the end of the First World War or even before.

The fundamental difficulty in the Middle East (and also in much of Africa) is with the borders between the various countries. These were drawn up mainly by the French and the British, and in the case of Libya, the Italians and for Morocco, the Spanish. No regard was taken of tribal areas, or religious differences. The Kurds, for example, have always occupied an area covering parts of Turkey, Syria and Iraq. No account was taken of which were mainly Shiite areas and which were Sunni. This is why for many years the countries that were peaceful were those ruled by dictators!

If you look at an atlas you will see that many borders are straight

lines across the land.

We tend to consider the Middle East to be an area comprising Muslim nations and therefore they should surely be able to talk to each other and agree. How wrong we are. During my travels I used to go to Saudi Arabia, fairly often, and got to know a Sheikh quite well.

He had been a minister in the Saudi government so was close to the royal family. We were discussing, one evening, the then situation and he said the fundamental problem for the Western world was that it did not understand the Order of Hate in the area.

He asked me who did I think a Saudi Arab would hate most. I suggested the Israelis followed perhaps by the Americans. He agreed with the Israelis and commented that as they were really family, they would always be hated the most. Next, he said, would be the Palestinians followed by the Syrians and then the Egyptians!

What concerns me is I see no sign that real constructive thought is being given to try and address the longstanding problems in the Middle East. Without this, we only open the way to the emergence of groups such as IS, who take advantage of the situation for their own evil purposes.

P Flanagan
Hythe

think is a fair rent?

Will Syrians be expected to queue for food at food banks or will

they be given money to spend, as they like? Will the council furnish the houses and supply them with

TV, computers and mobile phones? Will the Syrians be here for a short period until it is safe to go home?

When the refugee crisis in Europe first came on the news we had many bleating hearts, Church and celebrities offering their home, how many of these refugees are going to be taken in by them? That at least would be a saving as they would feed them house them from their own money.

Finally who are these people, have they been vetted properly? How many will be Christian the most persecuted religious group in the Middle East or will they all be Muslims?

Although I live in Sittingbourne, what Ashford council does today, Swale council will do tomorrow

Douglas Malem,
Sittingbourne

Lydd is taking off to nowhere

PERHAPS the supporters of Lydd airport could explain to the unenlightened how exactly they hope to succeed when they are in the middle of nowhere with lousy transport links?

If Manston with the longest runway in western Europe and excellent transport links couldn't succeed I don't see how Lydd possibly can.

Michael Vick,
Sittingbourne

Some words on doing too little

THE problem with the Establishment's so-called Christian religions, is they have preached another Jesus. They forget God said only "the truth shall make you free" [KoS 29.11].

They conveniently forget the Jesus that stopped a disciple using violence to save him, who uncharacteristically lost his temper at the money changers in the Temple, who came to fulfil the law of the prophets, old and new and said he came to do his Father's will, not his own, or that of imperfect humans with their own agendas.

They prefer, 'we think', to 'the Bible says'. Is it any surprise they have lost God's blessing?

The better educated people of today can see little difference between these counterfeit Christianities, than the world system Christ told them to 'get out of', so as to inherit his Kingdom. The lesson has been you need to do very little to be 'saved', so that's just what people now do, very little.

Phil Granger,
West Malling

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Faversham Recreation Ground

by **Brian Summers**

To see your photograph printed, email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk, or post it to **Archant KOS Media, Images of Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP**. Be sure to include your name, address and a contact telephone number. Unfortunately we cannot return any prints, and please do not send negatives. Note: all digital images must be no less than 200dpi. Please note, our relationship with MyFerryLink has now come to an end. We thank them for their long support.

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Quote: BO2/3-KOS

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Over 40s only • £10pp deposit

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Worthing Winter Warmer Party Chatsworth Hotel 29 Jan & 5 Feb, 2016 • Quote: WG1/2-KOS

Join us in Worthing for a Winter Warmer Party and enjoy £1 drinks and live entertainment every night. The Chatsworth is one of the finest hotels on the south coast, just a stone's throw from the sea and a short stroll to the town centre. All bedrooms are en-suite and a lift services all floors.

INCLUDED: £1 drinks from 7pm to 10pm both evenings - pint of house beer or small glass of wine • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts • Live nightly entertainment • 2 nights sharing an en-suite room with TV & free wifi



Free drinks
Entertainment
Over 40s only
£10pp deposit

**3 NIGHTS
HALF BOARD
PLUS
£139^{PP}**

Showaddywaddy

Mamma Mia & Super 70s Party Pontins Pakefield, Suffolk Coast 8 July, 2016 • Quote: SS7-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for a Super Summer Party - for over 40s only - to make the most of our favourite season. We've lined up a brilliant entertainment showbill featuring 70s themed music and nostalgia, including a live performance by 70s rock-n-rollers Showaddywaddy, a screening of Mamma Mia the movie, plus Abba and Rod Stewart tribute acts. With non-stop entertainment from Friday evening to Sunday evening and free drinks every night, this is one party weekend you won't want to miss.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrade available

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

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KENT LIFE

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LATEST PEUGEOTS: Sporty 308 GTi has joined the 308 range, while the 108 (inset left) continues as a city car star, the 2008 (inset right) conquers new heights and (below) the cavernous 5008 MPV

Peugeot roars loud and proud

BRAND UPDATE: French marque soared onwards and upwards in 2015, aided by yet more additions to the classy 308 hatchback line-up...

SOME 18 months after the original 308 hatchback arrived, Peugeot has just added the icing on the cake by launching the GTi version.

It underlined why the 308 won the coveted European Car of the Year award in 2014, and Peugeot's declared intent to move upmarket and consolidate itself as a global brand.

The GTi is a worthy successor to previous Peugeot GTi stars such as the 205, 309 and 306 variants, and yet also exhibits that Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde nature we now want from our performance models – light controls and genteel behaviour when commuting or stuck in traffic, but a touch of the hooligan when a safe opportunity arises.

For me though, the star is the SW estate model, with its premium feel and huge load space for such a relatively compact car in its class.

But the 308 range is just part of the Peugeot picture, where the 208 supermini grabs much of the limelight – not least because of its own entertaining GTi variant – and the compact 108 city car represents such a big improvement over its 107 predecessor.

Once more it is a spin-off from a joint project with Citroen and Toyota, but the 108 is the poshest of the three clones, looking particularly smart when fitted with a contrasting colour



roll-top electric roof.

And while the French marque might not make those big 'familiale' estates any more, it's still in the versatility business through its two crossovers – the Nissan Qashqai-rivalling 3008 and compact 2008 – plus the 5-7-seat 5008.

Even better, the two crossovers are available with Grip Control, a clever traction control on the front driving wheels, which enables the car to mimic all-wheel drive security. I can tell you it works: Peugeot asked me to drive a 2008 up an indoor ski slope.



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Book a test-drive

Nissan Pulsar radiates budget appeal

Despite the stellar name, this Nissan hatchback offers down to earth good sense, with good space and low running costs, **writes Steve Loader...**

NISSAN cast off its 'boring' prefix in 2007 when it launched the Qashqai – a great car and an exciting new market approach.

Part people carrier, part 4x4, part family hatch and a good drive too, it answered the prayers of many a confused family motorist.

With its one-size-fits-all approach, the Qashqai also enabled Nissan to ditch three poor sellers – the Primera fleet/family model, Almera Tino MPV and Almera family hatchback – to make major production savings.

However, facing a market where many buyers are downsizing, the Japanese marque re-entered the family hatch sector last year with the all-new five-door Pulsar.

It looks stylish and upmarket, yet is competitively priced from £15,995, made even more tempting by generous spec, low running costs and the brand's reputation for reliability.

And there's literally more to it than meets the eye, because the Nissan is a big car on the inside, helped by the longest wheelbase (2,700mm) in its class, offering above average leg and headroom front and back.

This isn't at the price of boot space



either; the Pulsar offers 385 litres, well ahead of key rivals like the Vauxhall Astra (370), Kia Ceed (362), VW Golf (341) and the sector best seller, the Ford Focus (237).

The Peugeot 308 beats it with 470, but achieved by stealing rear legroom – not an issue with the Pulsar.

Such practicality will be welcomed

by many private buyers, but tax-conscious fleet/company car 'user choosers' will also love the low running costs of the best-selling diesel variant: road tax exemption and an official combined 78.5mpg.

Unfortunately, it does add £1,900 to the car's price against the versatile direct-injection petrol turbo



equivalent tested here (56.5mpg combined), so you must be sure that you will claw back that extra outlay through higher mileages and superior fuel consumption.

There's not much to choose between them for performance: the diesel is quicker away at the start, but the petrol marginally faster over

Nissan Pulsar N-TEC DIG-T 115

Price:	from £19,295
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Kia Ceed

the 0-62mph sprint (10.7 seconds v. 11.5).

If you really need more performance, there is a 190bhp turbo-charged version (from £22,545) and the promise of a Nismo performance flagship later on, but the current Pulsar chassis is clearly not designed to challenge the VW Golf or Ford Focus in the handling department.

As that well-organised and spacious cabin already argues, this is a car built to be cost-effective and easy to live with – attributes that established Nissan (née Datsun) when it came to the UK.

The interior is built to last, if not particularly spectacular, and everything falls to hand nicely, while refinement and comfort is good. You might never love it, but you'll never hate it either. Once upon a time it would have been called a Sunny.

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We have an exciting career opportunity in early 2016 for a Finance Manager in this unique and iconic setting. We are looking for a qualified CCAB Accountant or qualified by experience individual to ensure the smooth running of the Finance team. You will be responsible for the timely and accurate recording, processing, analysing of financial information. As Finance Manager you will require good organisational and communication skills, excellent IT knowledge and have worked in a similar environment but with solid experience in ledger reconciliation and processing a payroll. Knowledge of Sage accounts and working in a School or for a Charity would be an advantage. Salary: £30,000 to £33,000 pa dependant on experience.

Closing date: midday 6th January,

Interviews: week beginning 11th January.

An application form & further details can be located on the School's website www.doyrms.com, emailing reception@doyrms.com or 01304 245023.

CVs will not be accepted. Notification will be sent via email.

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Candidates must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post including checks with past employers and an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau.

Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care..

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- **Evidence of continual professional development**
- **Teaching and Assessing Course or equivalent**

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Liz Justice, Ward Manager, 07964 416965

For a job description and application form please visit www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Justine Whittle, HR Assistant

Telephone: 01304 222684

E-mail: recruitment@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospitals is an equal opportunity employer. These positions are subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.



LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

**Licensing Act 2003
Notice of application to VARY a
Premises Licence**

Name of applicant: Co-operative Group Food Ltd
Address of Premises: Co-operative, 2 Church Road, Murston, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3RE

The premises currently has the benefit of a Premises Licence, number SIT/SWALE/189/0127. The purpose of this application is to vary the store layout by re-locating the main entrance doors, and the cash dispenser. In all other respects the licence will remain unchanged.

Anyone wishing to make a representation to this application may do so by 6th January 2016.

A record of the application made to the Licensing Authority will be kept on a register at the address given below and the register may be inspected during normal office hours but by appointment only.

All representations regarding this application MUST BE IN WRITING and sent to:

Licensing Department
Swale Borough Council
East Street, Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 3HT
Or www.swale.gov.uk

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and is subject to a maximum fine of £5,000 on summary conviction for the offence.

Ward Hadaway

**Goods Vehicle
Operator's Licence**

O M Kelly Transport Ltd trading of 12 Crispe Close, Gillingham ME8 9RU is applying to change an existing license as follows

To add an operating centre to keep 2 goods vehicles and 2 trailers at Yard 5 Marshlands Farm, Lower Road, Minster on Sea, Sheerness ME12 3RT

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116

**STOPPING UP OF LAND AT THE OLD
STABLES, MOORDEN FARM, CHIDDINGSTONE
CAUSEWAY, TONBRIDGE, TN11 8JD**

I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT The Kent County Council as Highway Authority for the County of Kent propose to make an application to the Magistrates' Court on 28 January 2016 at 10:00 for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at The Old Stables, Moorden Farm, Chiddingstone Causeway, Tonbridge, TN11 8JD as Edged Red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of the draft order and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of The Kent County Council at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ.

Any person to whom this Notice has been given or who uses the highway specified or who would be aggrieved by the making of the Order may appear before the Magistrates' Court to raise an objection or make a representation on the application. Any person intending to appear before the Magistrates' Court at the hearing of the application is requested to inform David McKnight by post to Legal Services, The Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ or by email david.mcknight@kent.gov.uk before 18 January 2016 quoting reference number LS/21/109718/608.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact David McKnight using the contact details shown above.

ROGER WILKIN

**ACTING DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS,
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Dennis ready to go full 12 rounds

The middleweight wants to go distance after Challenger win

Boxing

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

CHATHAM middleweight Grant Dennis has hailed what he has described as his best performance to date after he defeated the experienced Wayne Reed at Medway Park.

The unbeaten 32-year-old claimed the newly-sanctioned Challenger belt in his fifth career victory, and excelled in an impressive performance using fluid movement, rapid hand speed and exciting variety of combinations to outpoint the 28-year-old from Sheffield.

Dennis told KoS: "It was definitely my toughest test to date but also my best performance."

"He didn't want to go home empty-handed but I was just too quick, sharp and clever for him on the night."

"It was amazing to win in front of my friends and family, and to have my kids join me in the ring was an incredible moment."

"There were people who I hadn't seen since junior school in the crowd as well so it was a really great night."

The eight-round bout provided the Medway boxer with his first stretch going past four rounds, but Dennis says he felt comfortable and is eyeing full-length bouts in the near future.

"The longer rounds suit me," he said.

"After the first two or three rounds, I was just warming up. I could have done 12 rounds in there."

"I always train for that and I'll be ready to go the distance when the opportunity presents itself."

Dennis says there will be very little rest for him over the festive period,



CHAMPION: Chatham's Grant Dennis shows off his British Challenger title belt after beating Wayne Reed at Medway Park

with more fights in the pipeline for the new year, including a potential appearance on the undercard of a David Haye fight at the O2.

"I was back in the gym on the Monday straight after the fight, and I won't ever stop until I'm the best in the world."

"My brother and I always go for a

six-mile run on Christmas morning. It's just tradition, and that'll be the same this year."

"Being the first in Kent to win the belt is a great achievement."

"I'm hungry so this is just the starters. I've still got main course and dessert to go, so this is just the start of the journey."

Carlisle humble Welling in FA Cup

WELLING United's FA Cup dream ended in tears as they crashed out of the competition following a 5-0 defeat against Carlisle United at Park View Road on Sunday.

A bumper crowd of 2,028 turned out in force to support the last remaining Kent side, but fans were left disappointed after a humbling 90 minutes.

Charlie Wyke scored a hat-trick for the visitors on his 23rd birthday, in a thumping loss that in truth really could have been even worse for the Wings.

Wyke opened the scoring on 18 minutes when he latched onto a through ball by Jabo Ibehre and fired the ball past Michael McEntegart.

However, Welling responded well to going a goal down and would have considered themselves unfortunate



BATTLE: Welling's Michael Chambers in action against Carlisle

not to be awarded a penalty when George Porter appeared to be shoved over in the box.

Welling responded well but suffered a sucker punch just before the interval, when Carlisle doubled their lead with a freak goal credited to Anthony Sweeney.

Things went from bad to worse as Harry Osborne was dismissed for denying a clear goalscoring opportunity in the box when he bundled over Sweeney, and the League Two side extended their lead to three as Danny Grainger converted from 12 yards.

Wyke had an easy tap in for his second and Carlisle's fourth after McEntegart had parried Jason Kennedy's effort, and while there was time for the Wings to hit the crossbar through Sam Corne's free kick, Wyke completed his treble in stoppage time with a neat finish at the near post after good work by Patrick Brough.

Sport Shorts

» Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

Snodland welterweight pencils in his next fight

UNBEATEN Kent welterweight George Hennon has lined up his next fight for early next year.

With two wins already under his belt, the 21-year-old's third professional fight will double up as trainer Johnny Greaves' 37th birthday.

He said: "My next fight is on March 4 at Grays Civic and it'll be Johnny's birthday and he said it'll be my birthday present to him if I get another win."

A former English and European kick-boxing champion, Hennon, who hails from Snodland, has so far defeated both of his opponents on points.

He triumphed over veteran Matt Seawright (5-122-5) on his professional debut in June this year and Ali Wyatt (4-28-2) four months later in October.

Hennon's third outing in the paid ranks will be his first six three-minute round contest, and he said: "Johnny's going to look for opponents for me to do a six-rounder with and I'm 100 per cent ready for it."



READY: George Hennon



HARTSDOWN: Home of Margate

Bull takes charge after Margate sack Brown

MARGATE have appointed club captain Nikki Bull as interim boss after Terry Brown was sacked.

The 34-year-old will be assisted by coach Jamie Stuart while the search for a permanent manager takes place over the coming weeks.

A club spokesperson said: "The main focus will be on first team training at our Kidbrooke base to ensure that the first team schedule remains uninterrupted."

"The board of directors firmly believe that both Nikki and Jamie are well respected characters within

the changing room and are in the best place to assist the club during this transitional period."

Brown, and assistant Stuart Cash, were relieved of their duties after defeat at St Albans last weekend was the latest in a series of poor results that saw the Gate drop to 19th in the National League South, only avoiding the relegation zone on goal difference.

"The club would like to place on records its thanks for all their hard work over the past three seasons," a spokesperson added.

Samuel extends loan stay at Gills

STRIKER Dominic Samuel has extended his loan stay at Priestfield until January 2.

The 21-year-old has excelled since joining from Reading earlier in the year, scoring on his debut against Bury.

Gillingham boss Justin Edinburgh said: "We are delighted to retain Dominic's services."

"He has given us that focal point up front and allows Cody [McDonald] and Rory [Donnelly] to play off him."

"We are pleased Reading have allowed him to stay."

"With the busy period we have got and the form we are in and he is in, it is fantastic to be able to extend his stay at the club."

Keep up-to-date with all Kent's sports news via social media on:
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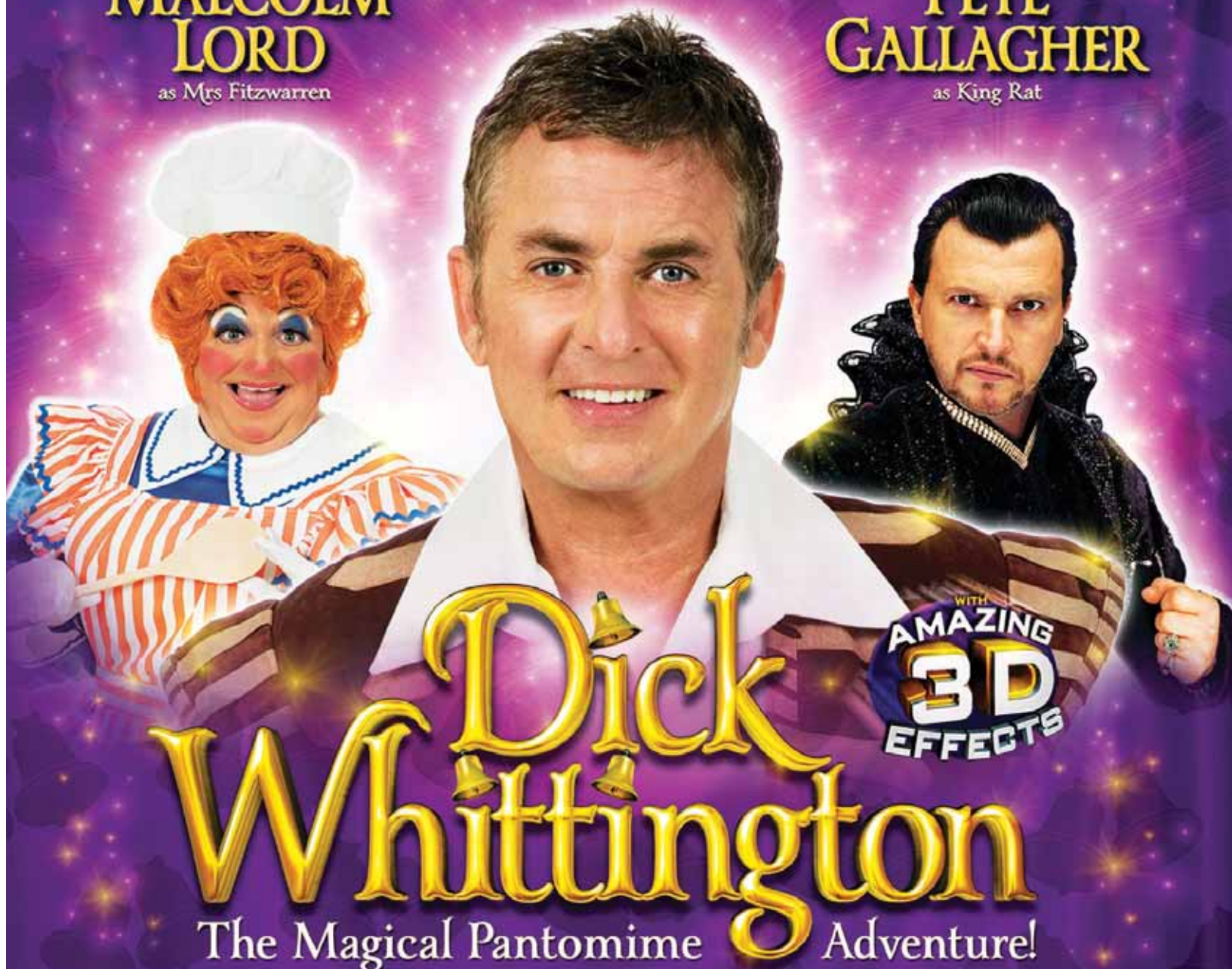
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LORD

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